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ABSTRACT

Addressing a variety of concerns of writing center directors and staff, directors of freshman composition, and English department chairs, the papers in this collection discuss writing center research and evaluation, writing center tutors, and computers in the writing center. The titles of the essays and their authors are as follows: (1) "Narrative as a Paradigm for Organization in Student Essays; Experimental Research in a Writing Center" (Lee Schweninger); (2) "Research in the Writing Center: The Environment and Some Findings" (Patrick Bizzaro, James W. Kirkland, Nina Diaz, Hope Toler); (3) "What's Going on in There? Paradigms and Problems in Measuring Writing Center Effectiveness" (David H. Roberts); (4) "Common Sense and Hard Work: Doing Research to Help Students Write Better" (Andrew L. Kelley); (5) "The Effectiveness of Sentence Combining in Writing Center Classes" (Willa Wolcott); (6) "The Effect of Developmental English Students' Perceptions about the Importance of Writing on Their Performance in Composition Class" (Willa Wolcott); (7) "A Teaching Learning Center: Writing, Peer Tutoring, and Self-Directed Learning" (Mary E. Willingham); (8) "The Joys and Rewards of Recruiting and Implementing a Volunteer Tutorial Staff" (Ina H. Steinberg); (9) "The Peer Tutor as Principal Benefactor in the Writing Center, or It Isn't Just for Teaching English Anymore" (Elizabeth S. Bell); (10) "The Perry Model Applied to the Training of Tutors: Caveats and Implications" (Lois Hore Overbeck); (11) "Training Peer Tutors to Work in the Ideal Writing Lab" (Teri S. Haas); (12) "Options for Active Learning: Using 'Bulletin Board' Software" (John S. Wallace); and (13) "Revision and Reading Benefit: Tutoring Students of Practical Writing with the Computer" (Part One--Melissa E. Barth, Part Two--William C. Wolff). (HTH)

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Selected Papers

of

The Southeastern Writing Center Association

editors

DAVID H. ROBERTS
and
WILLIAM C. WOLFF

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INTRODUCTION

The Southeastern Writing Center Association (SWCA) is pleased to publish papers selected from those given at its annual conferences of 1984 and 1985. Readers will find the year of the paper and the college association of the author in the Contents. Each paper addresses a concern of Writing Center directors and staff, directors of freshman composition, and English departmental chairs.

Lee Schweniger proposes that one paradigm for the way students organize essays is narrative. Her experimental research in the writing center indicates that students include abstract, orientation, evaluation, resolution, and coda as elements of their essays, although not all always appear there.

Patrick Bizzaro, James W. Mirkland, Nina Dias, and Hope Toler discuss research done in the writing center after future tutors read research theories and findings, analyze their own writing process, and keep personal journals on logs of success and failure in teaching writing especially to students academically disadvantaged or learning disabled. Two studies are described, both done at East Carolina University: "Writing Apprehension in Teachers and Methods they Employ in Teaching and Evaluating Writing" and the "Composing Process of Three LD University Students."

David H. Roberts shares his thoughts about measuring their effectiveness. He understands the limitations of imposing traditional expectations about teaching writing and sees the importance of replacing those expectations after reexamining the old paradigms, especially in Emig's terms. No single sample of evaluation will do for writing centers, says Roberts, as no single sample of student writing will do for grading. The learning environment, setting, and purpose must be known and taken into account.

Andrew L. Kelley proposes five important steps for using the writing center as a focus of research in order to improve student writing: 1) establishing appropriate areas of research, 2) conducting research, 3) collating data, 4) planning and implementation of appropriate changes, and 5) monitoring the changes.

Willa Wolcott concludes that although teaching sentence combining in the writing center leads to advanced students improving their style, the unstructured setting there is not better than the traditional classroom. Yet Walcott assures us that sentence combining is beneficial as a composing tool which, though practiced under limited time restrictions, will benefit some basic writers.

Willa Wolcott has examined how developmental writing students' perceptions of writing's importance affects their performances in composition classes. Alas, from answers to her questionnaires, Wolcott's findings confirm those of Daly: No substantial relationship has been proven between attitudes toward writing and actual performance. However, Wolcott suggests, that in their classes, teachers connect writing with the world of work and with students' personal development in order to help students improve their mastery of writing skills.

Mary E. Willingham's article concentrates on reaching collaborative learning and peer tutoring in the Teaching Learning Center through applications of the psychological theories and methods of Carl Rogers and Sidney Jourard.

Recruiting and implementing a volunteer tutorial staff is the topic of Ina K. Steinberg's article. She reports that after paper screening, observation of conferences between tutors and students, matching of students to tutors, and constant supervision, 80% of applicants become excellent tutors.

Elizabeth S. Bell proposes that tutors develop skills in communication and leadership that are of value to corporate employees. She suggests that writing center directors use the appropriate vocabulary to describe their tutors' skills when writing letters of recommendation for them to employers outside the university.

The focus of Lois More Overbeck is the Perry Model Applied for Tutor Training. The Model is really a scheme or description of various stages students go through understanding and accepting authority and responsibility. Tutors should be aware of these stages and be partners with student writers, listening to attitudes, and planning appropriately.

Teri S. Haas proposes a plan for training tutors. She elaborates on some assumptions about composing and tutoring, recruitment, criteria for tutors, selection, an overview of training, the evaluation of training, and on training sessions. Finally, she provides an appedix of useful tools such as exercises for tutor training, a tutor's feedback form, and other important aids.

John S. Wallace provides examples of software created originally for a sophomore literature course but applicable wherever peer-tutoring and student contributions are part of a course. His article, "Options for Active Learning: Using 'Bulletin Board' Software," provides a flow diagram for creating multiple-choice questions and answers, essay questions, and news items to be used by the class on Apple computers.

Melissa E. Barth describes her efforts to get students to understand "reader benefit" or a "you" instead of a "we" attitude in business writing. She wants business writers to learn that customers react positively when it is their concerns that are central, rather than the concerns of corporations. William C. Wolff responds by recording how he led writing center staff members to create theoretically-based heuristics for helping students change from self-centered phrasing to "you" phrasing.

The editors hope that the readers of these papers find in them answers to problems they face and, that they will be motivated to come to the SWCA conference in 1987.

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Narrative as a Paradigm for Organization in Student Essays: Experimental Research in a Writing Center

Lee Schweninger

I would like to begin with the opening paragraph of Mark Twain's essay, "How to Tell a Story":

> "I do not claim that I can tell a story as it ought to be told. I only claim to know how a story ought to be told, for I have been almost daily in the company of the most expert story-tellers for many years."

Since I have worked as a tutor in the Writing Center at the University of North Carolina, I, too, have been almost daily in the company of the most expert story-tellers. Even the most basic writers know how to tell a story. They know that a story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. They know that the beginning introduces the situation, names the main characters, and provides the setting. They know that the middle is the narrative itself, the events retold in the order thay actually happened. They know that the end signals that the narrative is finished.

In this paper I present my research method, culled from the ten-minute free-writing diagnostic that I ask each student in the Writing Center to provide. The research shows that student narratives adhere to the basic outline for all narrative, and we can logically apply the findings to the tutoring of basic writers. By analyzing the structure of their own narratives, students can learn to improve their skills in organizing their own essays.

The beauty of this research method is two-fold: because the free-writing exercise is a diagnostic, obtaining data is an integral part of the tutorial session, and the results ennable the tutor to combine positive reinforcement with effective tutoring. Since all students know how to tell a story, they all know how to organize an essay. Tutors can begin the tutorial instruction by praising the student's content and method of organization.

I ask each student to write for ten minutes in response to the following question:

> Were you ever in a situation where you were in serious danger of being killed, where you said to yourself–"This is it?" Simply explain what happened.

(I am indebted to William Labov for the question and for the organizational terminology I use in this research.**Language in the Inner City**, 1972.) My research shows that student narratives share the same basic elements of organization, and these elements lend themselves to classification. My data allow us to extend the organizational pattern found in student narratives to student essays in general. Of the exercises recorded (I have screened over eighty narratives), virtually all constitute a narrative. The students recount past experiences by narrative, an essay which records a series of events in the order they actually occurred.

A minimal narrative consists of the sequence of two temporally ordered clauses. In narrative A, for example, clauses j and k constitute a minimal narrative. That is, the narrator's trying to "get back into the boat" depends on her having already "just finished skiing." The clauses cannot be inverted without disrupting the temporal sequence.

In addition to the narrative proper, which is made up of a series of minimal narratives, a fully developed narrative will include the following sections: an abstract, an orientation, an evaluation, a resolution and a coda. I wish to briefly define the terms abstract, orientation, and coda as they apply to student narratives before focusing on the application of narrative to the principles of organization in general.

Clauses which summarize the whole story but do not replace the narrative itself constitute an abstract. More than half of the student narratives I screened do contain an abstract. Narrative A includes a simple reference to the question asked: "I was once in a situation like this or at least a little like this." But the abstract also summarizes the feeling from the experience

and the importance of the experience to the narrator. In narrative A, clauses a through e constitute the abstract. Some student narratives give more precise abstracts: one student writes, for example: "I cannot remember being in serious danger as to being killed. I do remember though that once I was almost attacked by a fox." Giving away the ending does not keep the narrator from telling the whole story.

Narrative B has no abstract, but does have an orientation. The orientation, the second section in a fully developed narrative, tells when, where, who, and why. The orientation can occur in the course of the first several narrative clauses, but more common for written narratives is an orientation section made up of free clauses, clauses which are not chronologically ordered. Narrative B has one sentence of orientation, clause a, which tells who and where, but the details are provided in the narrative proper.

Narrative A contains a more distinct orientation section in clauses f through i: it tells where, Topsail Beach; when, two or three years ago; and who, father, sister and narrator. The orientation in narrative A is typical of student narratives in that it emphasizes the place and the situation by elaborate detail. Student narratives emphasize place and situation rather than main characters. The antagonist usually does receive minute attention; however, Narrative A devotes much space to the water, for example, and narrative B gives much attention to the physical features of the cliff.

From the orientation we can jump to the coda or conclusion and then come back to the narrative proper. The function of the coda is to signal that the narrative is finished. This signal can take different forms. A common coda is a simple reference to the opening, such as "This is the only time I can really say that I have been that close to death." A coda can instead show the effect of the incident such as "I would never try this tactic again." Codas which bridge the gap between the moment of the experience and the present (the moment of telling) are particularly skillful. Student narratives sometimes conclude with a return to the present: "All of this happened within about 1 or 2 seconds but I can remember it and dream about it seemingly lasting for minutes." Here the narrator bridges the gap between the past and the moment of telling.

The two student narratives here, however, conclude with a dramatic statement about the incident. Both codas serve as a final evaluation of the importance of the experience. In narrative B, for example, clauses p and q continue the narrative in one clause and evaluate the danger of the experience in a subordinate clause by emphasizing the sense of relief after the danger is past. In narrative A, the clauses w and x are simply statements to remind the reader that the experience was genuinely a close call. This reminder is a method of evaluation of the experience. It is a statement about why the narrative is worth telling in the first place.

There are three major methods the narrator can use to evaluate the narrative and explain what the point is. The methods of evaluation are external, embedded and syntactical. The most obvious type of evaluation is external and is exemplified by clause w in narrative A. External evaluation occurs when the narrator simply interrupts the story line to explain its point or significance. Here (in clause w) the narrative stops completely while the narrator exclaims, "It was a really scarey experience."

The narrator can also evaluate by stopping the action to describe the situation or to explain what is going through his or her mind. In narrative A, for example, the water is carefully described. Clauses l and m stop the narrative to evaluate the weather and water. "The sky was very dark and the water was rough and choppy with whitecaps all up and down the sounds (sic) channel."

In narrative B, the slope down which the narrator falls is carefully described. The narrative proper begins at clause b, but the action is suspended while the details of the ridge are elaborated. As if conscious of this suspension of action, the narrator returns to the narrative proper with the connective **anyway**.

If we conclude that complexity in departures fron a basic narrative syntax corresponds to

verbal skill and effectiveness of narration, we can logically apply these findings to student narratives as a step in teaching basic organizational skills.

The narrative pattern corresponds to the major elements of any essay. An essay has an introduction (abstract and orientation), a group of paragraphs of development (narrative proper) and the conclusion (resolution and coda). Narrative thus serves as a paradigm; it provides the student with a formal means of organizing an essay. This means is one that the student already knows and can use effectively. The tutor should not hesitate to point out to the student the good points of the narrative and build upon the student's ability.

By juxtaposing the abstract and orientation sections of their own narration with an introduction, the students can see that they do know how to write an effective introduction and need only apply the principles of narrative to those of essay writing in general. Because they naturally introduce the narrative, they need only transfer this knowledge to another type of essay, analysis or argument, for example. The abstract and orientation supply the crucial details for the telling just as an introduction introduces the scope of the essay, names the subject, states the thesis, and indicates the direction of development.

Development by paragraph replaces the narrative proper. In the narrative, students demonstrate how the development in narrative is crucial to the point of the story or essay. The problem of organization within the body is eliminated because chronological order is both the most logical and the easiest method of organizing. Two problems which freshman rhetorics emphasize, for example, can be treated immediately. The first, irrelevant detail, is rarely a problem in student narratives. Details are generally given only as they are needed; any needless or excess description is easily identified and can be omitted in revision. Secondly, chronological order seems to be automatic to the writer of a narrative. Almost all events of a narrative (outside those mentioned in the abstract section) are ordered chronologically. The natural tendency to organize in a narrative can be stressed, and students can apply their method to other strategies of writing. All moments in a narrative are crucial to the story. By comparison, the paragraphs of an essay are crucial to its development.

The coda or conclusion includes either a return to the present, to the audience, or to the introduction. Examination of the students' skillful handling of the conclusion offers the writer of the essay a means of concluding beyond mere summary and restatement of thesis.

Although their treatment of narrative is generally brief, freshman rhetorics do emphasize that the narrative has a point. As we have seen, combining free writing and the danger of death question offers the student an immediate advantage; the narrative has an intrinsic point: a student's life. Just as narratives have a point, essays in general have a thesis. Moreover, the danger of the student's bludgeoning the reader with the message can be effectively corrected by the tutor's explaining external evaluation and showing how such evaluation can be avoided or embedded.

In addition to the narrative as a paradigm for principals of organization, the aspect of narrative which deserves attention is that of evaluation. Although I do not have time here to elaborate in any more detail on the value of evaluation as it applies to student narratives, the research shows that investigation of narratives may provide a method of tutoring style as well as organization. Because external evaluation is both least effective in building suspense and most common in student narratives, the students' focus can be directed to forms of embedded evaluation. Through application of the principles of embedding and of departures from a basic narrative syntax, the student can be made aware of how successful narration depends on complex structures that both suspend the action and qualify the main clause, yet maintain the dramatic continuity.

The ten-minute free-writing exercise provides the tutor and student with the raw material for a mini-course in the principles of organization. The students can see how well they tell

stories, be encouraged by their ability, and turn that skill to other types of writing assignments they will encounter in their college careers. They may not learn to tell a story as Mark Twain tells one, but they will learn that they can learn how to write.

NARRATIVE A

a I was once in a situtaiton like this or at least a little like this.
b I'm not sure
I thought I was going to die
c but I had this unreal totally terrifying experience.
d It lasted only a few seconds
e I will never forget it.
f It happened at Topsailbeach, about 2 or 3 years ago.
g We were skiing.
h My father was driving the boat
i and my sister, Susan, was also in the boat.
j I had just finished skiing
k and I was trying to get back into the boat in a hurry
because it was about to storm
l The sky was very dark
m and the water was rough and choppy with whitecaps all up
and down the sounds channel.
n Somehow the boat got turned around
o or maybe I got turned around
p and the boat was right on top of me.
q The current was very bad
r and it was pulling me under the boat.
s I was drained of energy
because I had skied a long way
t and I couldn't fight the tide.
u The motor was on so
Daddy could not hear me yelling.
v Luckily, Susan heard me
and grabbed my arms to pull me to the outside of the boat.
w It was a really scarey experience
x and the thing was
my father never really realized
what a big deal it was.

NARRATIVE B

a I used to live in northwest New Jersey,
which is quite mountainous.
b One day a few of my friends and myself were running along
a ridge with woods sloping down on one side and about a
60 sheer rock formation sloping downward to where it
abruptly ended about 20 feet down
c and then there was a drop of about 300 feet.

d Anyway, I tripped
and fell onto the sheer rock
and started sliding down.
e I kept frantically grabbing for any little ledge to hold onto
f but the rocks were too smooth.
g Then I could tell
I was getting close to the edge
because my friends were standing on the ridge
watching me
and they seemed very far away.
h Anyway, I slid by this fairly small pine tree
which was growing inbetween the rock about a couple of
feet away.
i I grabbed one of the branches
j and it broke
k but it didn't break cleanly.
l Part of the branch was still connected to the tree.
m This stopped me from sliding
n and my legs were over the edge all the way up to my knees.
o I pulled myself up very slowly
and then reached for the tree trunk
p and I hugged
and kissed it,
which my friends thought was pretty funny
q and after I carefully climbed back up to the ridge
I thought
it was pretty funny too.

Research in the Writing Center: The Environment and Some Findings

Patrick Bizzaro, James W. Kirkland, Nina Diaz, Hope Toler

There are four authors to this paper because the topic, the research environment and some research findings are at once an individual effort and a community agreement. The Writing Center, because of its traffic, its access to students, and its focus on writing activities is clearly the proper place for writing research. But there are some variables to this research that need to be considered: How do research topics come about? What topics best reflect individual interests and university priorities consistent with university priorities? What kinds of studies are underway at East Carolina University?

THE RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

How Do Research Topics Come About?

The research process begins once a researcher asks fundamental questions about the writing process that may occur in a variety of ways to be discussed briefly here. One method is by reading intensively the research findings and theories of others. Another is by analyzing the writing process, starting with one's own. A third is by keeping a personal journal or log of successes and failures experienced in teaching writing.

At ECU each of the three methods described above are used in various ways in a course preparatory to actual writing research. Teaching assistants are introduced to selected works of scholarship in the field of composition; acquainted with various theories of composing, editing, and evaluating; and eventually required to integrate theoretical principles with practical in-class applications. The course begins with a discussion of matters essential to operating the Writing Center and composition courses such as "Methods of Running Tutorials" and "Using Error Analysis in Discussing Student Writing." Next students are acquainted with the writing process through guest lectures by various full-time department members on subjects such as "Prewriting," "Making and Evaluating Writing Assignments," and "Writing for Different Audiences." A third major consideration in the course is language, a subject treated in guest lectures on "Grammar and Usage," "Sentence Combining," "Sentence Variety," and "Connecting Reading to Writing."

Faculty presenting materials on these topics regularly provide for the students bibliography and suggestions on what aspects of the subject might be further researched. Midway through the semester, teaching assistants are to propose a research project which is, in turn, discussed with both the Director of the Writing Center and the Director of Freshman Composition. The final paper and in-class presentation in the course are intended to provide opportunities for the students to do preliminary studies in their selected areas.

Students are also asked to keep journals in which they record three kinds of observations. First, they record their reaction to the theory they are presented in both the in-class presentations and the assigned readings, including Shaughnessy's ERRORS AND EXPECTATIONS, Lindemann's A RHETORIC FOR WRITING TEACHERS as well as journal articles by Bartholomae, North, Murray and others. Second, the journal includes observations about the trials and errors, successes and failures the teaching assistants experience in the classroom and tutorial sessions in the Writing Center. Finally, the teaching assistants keep a log of their experiences as writers, beginning with a writing about their history as writers, their composing processes, and the ways their habits as writers influence their teaching. We believe that before a writing researcher can successfully record observations about someone else's process of composition, the researcher should observe his or her own writing process.

What Topics are Most Consistent with University Priorities?

East Carolina University has long been considered a pioneer in the teaching of various subjects to special populations of students. Because of its location in eastern North Carolina and because it is the only state university on the coastal plain, it has as its special priority the recruiting and teaching of learning disabled and academically disadvantaged students. The Writing Center is an environment especially suited to teaching these students how to write, primarily because experiences with these students indicate that they perform better under the guidance of a tutor, responding not only to the increased attention given them, but because of the commitment they make to their tutors.

The Writing Center, in turn, is committed to meeting the needs of the university at large. This means not only providing programs of study to students in composition courses whose placement essays indicate a need for help on specific writing skills. It means asking, where gaps in research exist, basic questions with the intention of discovering what, exactly, can be done to provide instruction to these students.

The English department responded to a need to investigate the writing processes of learning disabled students by providing research assistantships to two graduate students to do initial problem identifications and journal searches to discover what, exactly, has been done so far to teach writing to these students. One research assistant studies learning disabilities, and another studies the connection between self-concept and teaching behaviors in teaching assistants in the belief that at least some of the difficulty in teaching special populations of students is derived from teachers' preconceptions of the students' problems and the students' anger at being identified and separated from the group.

The research assistants were required to work three hours each week in the Writing Center and four hours each week on their research. Their research involved building a bibliography, starting with a preliminary list provided by the Director of the Writing Center at the beginning of the summer. They were also required to annotate those sources and make journal reactions to the material read. Third, they were required to meet informally once each week with the Director of the Writing Center to discuss their progress in doing research. And, fourth, they were required to prepare a short paper which (a) presented their research findings, including a brief survey of sources; (b) drew conclusions from their reading to determine what kinds of instructional programs might work best in the teaching of writing to the student populations they studied; and (c) applied those conclusions to the ECU Writing Center, making a recommendation for a program of study and answering the following question: "What kinds of computer-assisted or computer-based instruction can be used to meet the needs of LD writers?"

The ECU Office of Handicapped Student Services made funds available to the university to strengthen programs designed to assist the handicapped. The Writing Center made a proposal to purchase a microcomputer for the purposes, primarily, of researching the composing processes of learning disabled students. This research would be done in an attempt to discover when, in the writing process, greatest interference takes place for students with different types of learning disabilities. We believe that one result of this research will be the development of specific teaching strategies for working with learning disabled writers and some increased knowledge about the effects of tutorial instruction and microcomputers as they are used to instruct these students over a period of time. We also set out to determine what effect, if any, teachers' writing apprehension might have on their teaching behaviors in the belief that some teachers would be better suited to work with these populations of students than others because they feel less apprehension about writing, specifically, and working with specific teaching techniques, generally.

The result of having identified priorities within the university is not only the acquisition of a microcomputer for purposes of research, but also increased awareness on the part of Writing Center personnel of the special needs of learning disabled students. We believe, once conclud-

ed, the research conducted by our research assistants will be of some aid to others who work with disabled students.

DESCRIPTION OF TWO STUDIES

Research assistant Hope Toler studied the relationship between the writing apprehensions of teachers and their teaching behaviors in working with writing students. We believe this research will be far-reaching and will answer some questions we have asked concerning the type of teachers best suited to deal with learning disabled students. We want to know if teachers who experience high writing apprehension tend to perform teaching activities that prevent them from effectively working with learning disabled students. We want to know if teachers who, themselves, exhibit evaluation anxiety tend to evaluate students writing in a particular way. And we wonder if a holistic approach to the teaching of writing is consistent with both the behaviors in teaching exhibited by low apprehensive teacher/writers and with the way special populations of students learn how to write.

WRITING APPREHENSION IN TEACHERS AND METHODS THEY EMPLOY IN TEACHING AND EVALUATING WRITING

According to Daly and Miller ("Empirical Development"), writing apprehension is characterized "by a general avoidance of writing and situations perceived by the individual to potentially require some amount of writing accompanied by the potential for evaluation of that writing." High apprehensive writers usually avoid writing and evaluation of their writing because they find such situations more punishing than rewarding and usually have poor skill development and inadequate role models.

Much research about writing apprehension has already been done. According to Daly and Wilson, high writing apprehension is related positively to low self-esteem. These students avoid writing and usually devise plans for their courses and careers with activities that require little or no writing (Daly and Miller, "Further Studies").

Students who exhibit high writing apprehension usually write shorter essays and with lower level of syntactic maturity that low apprehensives (Faigley, Daly, and Witte). When these students revise, they revise, first, on the sentence level. Some of these students cannot perform beneficial activities such as freewriting, brainstorming, or clustering because they think they have to plan these tasks before doing them.

After observing different attitudes toward writing and a wide range of teaching behaviors by teaching assistants in the Writing Center, the researcher wondered if the attitudes of the teaching assistants made a difference in their teaching and evaluating behaviors. If teaching behaviors were related to the tutors' feelings about their own writing abilities, these same feelings about themselves as writers would be reflected in their methods of evaluating writing.

The purpose of Toler's study is to answer the following question: Is there a relationship between levels of writing apprehension in teachers of writing and the methods they employ in teaching and evaluating writing?

To answer this question since it entails study of an area which literature in the field shows to be previously unexplored, Toler developed a questionnaire (hereafter, Teaching Methods Questionnaire) about teaching behaviors based on observation and information available in journals devoted to articles on the teaching of writing. She used the Teaching Methods Questionnaire and the Miller-Daly Writing Apprehensions Questionnaire in a pilot study of twenty (20) graduate teaching assistants who worked in the Writing Center.

In her pilot study, Toler isolated four dimensions of teaching behavior—impersonal error, interpersonal communication, reasons for error, and relating to students—and three dimensions

of writing apprehension – evaluation approach, stress approach, and end-product approach – and ran a factor analysis to study the intercorrelation among these variables. Her preliminary findings suggest that a relationship does exist between writers' apprehension and their methods of teaching writing. More specifically, (1) teachers who write only when necessary are apt to focus on grammatical errors in their students' writings rather than to see error as a sign that improvement is possible; (2) teachers who expect to do poorly when their writing is evaluated seldom search for cause of errors and rarely mention strengths in their students' writings; and (3) teachers who report discomfort in the final stages of composing seldom develop personal relationships with their students.

In a second study, using the same questionnaires, Toler will survey approximately 70 teachers of writing at East Carolina University.She hypothesizes that a positive relationship exists between teachers' writing apprehension and their methods used to teach students how to write and how to evaluate that writing. This study is in progress.

Another research assistant, Nina Diaz, investigated the coping strategies of three learning disabled students at four times over a sixteen week period to determine, first, if tutoring, when combined with word processing, is a successful method for teaching these students how to write and, second, if there is any change in the way these students describe their composing processes at these four junctures in time.

COMPOSING PROCESS OF THREE LD UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

The uses of microcomputers in the classroom for programmed learning, word processing, and self-evaluating procedures have rapidly increased over the last few years. Yet the use of microcomputers to teach writing to learning disabled (LD) university students, enabling these students to better cope with their disabilities, has not received as much attention in research as the former uses. One reason for this oversight is that each LD student is uniquely disabled; instructional methods which succeed with one LD student may not succeed with another. Another reason is that LD student-writers are difficult to study as subjects of research. However, in the absence of a well-documented approach to researching the writing processes of LD students on the microcomputer, the ethnographic study which treats appropriate each individual subject as idiosyncratic and unique seems most appropriate for the LD student. The research information available on uses of microcomputers to teach writing is limited only because this field is relatively new. However, in separate studies, Colette Daiute and Charles Blaschke have researched the feasibility of composing on microcomputers. At the same time, Janet Emig and Sondra Perl have demonstrated the feasibility of using case studies to study the composing process itself. Finally, researchers such as Kathleen Hurley and Holly O'Donnell have concentrated their research investigations on the composing abilities of the LD student. These researchers have defined the boundaries of their respective fields, but no one has yet studied the ways in which all three might be brought to bear on the composing problems of LD students.

The purpose of Diaz's study is to analyze the composing process of three LD university students at three intervals in time to discover the effects of tutorial and microcomputer instruction on the writing abilities of these students. First, the three subjects will participate in preliminary interviews to assess their attitudes toward writing and toward themselves as writers in light of results from past psychological reports and observations. Next, in an equipment training session, each student will be given the opportunity to learn how to operate the word processing software of a microcomputer. After these two initial meetings, the students will compose on the microcomputer, orally describing into a tape recorder their processes of writing. Then, in an interview, the students will answer questions asked by the researcher about their completed pieces of writing. The researcher will conduct during-draft tutorials, instructing the LD stu-

dents on revision and editing procedures using the microcomputer. This procedure will be contained in one-hour sessions once each week for eleven consecutive weeks.

This research will examine the following hypotheses: (1) students' learning disabilities must be treated differently; (2) although students are limited by the fact that the composed writing scrolls off screen, not allowing students to view the essay as a whole, the microcomputer does create the potential for the students to take risks (i.e., make numerous revisions) in writing that they may not otherwise take; (3) the tutorial offers students the personal interaction that enhances their willingness to finish assignments asked for by the researcher; (4) the language that students use to describe their process of composing becomes more sophisticated as the semester progresses, and finally (5) the overall writing performance, as seen in a pretest and a posttest of each of the three LD students, demonstrates a reduction in errors and improvement in syntactic maturity as a result of tutorial and microcomputer instruction.

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What's Going on in There?
Paradigms and Problems in Measuring Writing Center Effectiveness

David H. Roberts

Many, and perhaps most, innovative writing programs have never been objectively evaluated for their effectiveness in helping students achieve writing fluency. Three of the four writing centers I am most familiar with are no exception, including the writing center at my present institution, which serves more than 1,000 students per year. Our writing center, in operation for several years, is seldom even visited by faculty outside the writing center staff. And a writing center I directed for four years at another institution was never evaluated in any way by anyone other than the students and the director, and those evaluations were rather subjective. Indeed, no administrator and no other faculty member ever visited that writing center for more than a few seconds at a time. The evaluations of that writing center, and the one in operation at my current institution, have all been subjective, informal, and achieved through questionaires, like the evaluations of most forms of the writing lab (Steward & Croft, 1982).

Paradigms and problems in evaluating composition teaching methods are illustrated by a little story—told as truth, though it probably isn't, at least not in the sense that it actually happened—that surely makes a clear statement of the problem: A teacher using some non-traditional techniques was scheduled for an evaluation of his classroom procedures, that annual 5-minute visit from the department chair that is supposed to be a fair opportunity to judge an entire year's classroom activities. The chair, a literateur and current-traditionalist who uses the classroom lecture method of presentation and who grades Themes as Products, duly informed the instructor of the date and time of the impending classroom visitation, as though to warn the instructor to wear a crisp, ironed, white shirt, necktie, and conservative suit—even to wash his Nikes. The stage is normally set by telling the audience (usually students or a sympathetic colleague) that on the day of the visitation the class members were working in groups in writing center fashion, engaged in collaborative composing, as the instructor wandered from group to group, aiding in the writing process in whatever way he could, and generally just sticking his nose in the students' creative processes. About that time, as the tale is told, the chair came in, looked around at the students bunched in groups, actually enjoying writing, called the instructor aside and rather apologetically announced, "I must be here on the wrong day; I'll come back when you're teaching!"

Now, this little tale brings out several problems in evaluating writing instruction, problems shared by all writing programs, especially the non-traditional approaches to writing instruction found in writing centers.

The first, and perhaps the most obvious problem, is that evaluating writing instruction, like evaluating writing, often takes place on only the most superficial levels. An annual 5-minute classroom or writing center visitation that stresses classroom demeanor, the instructor's speech and appearance, and how quietly and obediently the students sit in their straight-as-arrows rows of desks is no more valid than assessing a student's writing and cognitive abilities by how precisely the student conforms to the modes of discourse or rhetorical patterns, a practice that has been under attack for at least 50 years (Conners, 1981).

Conceptual changes come about after higher-level evaluation; but with lower-level criticism, only lower-level, cosmetic changes are made, if any. English teachers are all too often ignorant of good methods of evaluation, so they take on the role of proofreader, almost compulsively marking every mechanical error (Miller, 1982). Heavy-handed surface detail criticism of student writing serves only to lower the student's self-esteem (Brimmer, 1982) and cause a decline of fluency (Shaughnessy, 1977); similarly, the annual 5-minute classroom visitation serves only to reinforce the evaluator's previously-conceived notion of the instructor's effectiveness as a teacher

of writing and, at best, causes only anxiety and cosmetic changes. In both cases, for the student and the instructor, what should be evaluated are the processes involved. Only then can the student's writing and cognitive processes be brought to maturity. Only then can the instructor's real effectiveness be assessed.

Another problem evident in the aforetold tale is that of the instructor being evaluated by the criteria of a paradigm he or she does not accept, or a writing center being evaluated from a world view conflicting with the view held by the writing center staff. Though Janet Emig's (1982) recent article on paradigms is concerned with research paradigms (her term is "inquiry paradigms") and not paradigms for evaluating teacher and program effectiveness, she clearly demonstrates the importance of one's point of view, or "governing gaze" in evaluating teacher and program effectiveness:

> We see what we elect to see. We have, as this metaphor puts it, a gaze that is governed—by our expectations, which are in turn governed by our experiences and what we have decided cognitively to make of them: by, that is, our hypotheses, schemes, and constructs. (p. 65)

So one problem of evaluating tutor and writing center effectiveness is that, too often, the evaluator has a set of expectations that grew out of his or her experiences with say, school grammar and current-traditional rhetoric.

If the writing program under evaluation is innovative and non-traditional (as writing centers are still considered by many, although they have been in existence in the U. S. for decades) the expectations governing the gaze of the evaluator may prevent the evaluator from seeing whether the method is successful. A single writing center visitation to evaluate a method in the light of other methods or other instructors at the same institution accepts, a priori, a positivistic gaze. That is, "there is no field, only focus, only the phenomenon to be examined a-contextually, with no consideration or acknowledgement of setting" (Emig, 1982, p. 66). In other words, like a single evaluation of a monolithic writing sample for placement in or exit from a particular writing course, many evaluations of writing center effectiveness are conceptually bare, operating from an impoverished view of learning because they do not take into account the learning environment, setting, or purpose. Perhaps this is one of the reasons our writing center—and many others—have not been evaluated by "outsiders": no one wants to have to evaluate a learning program based on a set of assumptions that differ from the evaluator's own assumptions.

How many other innovative writing programs remain unevaluated, or worse yet, mis-evaluated, for the same reason? Although evidence of change does now exist, as recently as two years ago, Maxine Hairston (1982) painted a bleak picture by stating unequivocally that "there is no external pressure to find a better way to teach writing" because of constant reinforcement of a paradigm that "denies that writing requires intellectual activity and ignores the importance of writing as a basic method of learning" (p. 79). It seems to me that what is considered unimportant receives only the most subjective and superficial kinds of evaluation, if any evaluation at all. It also seems to me that those of us interested in writing center instruction can continue bringing about change by continuing to challenge our colleagues to read the reports of recent research on composing, and by holding more writing center open houses so our colleagues will no longer wonder, "What's going on in there?"

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Common Sense and Hard Work: Doing Research to Help Students Write Better

Andrew L. Kelley

Administratively, the use of the writing center as a unified research focus presents five challenges: 1) targeting of appropriate areas of research, 2) execution of research, 3) collation of research data from completed studies, 4) planning and implementation of changes based upon research, and 5) monitoring of the success rate of the changes.

The targeting of appropriate research areas entails both a premise of professional ethics and a preliminary study. Ethically, researchers cannot seize the latest fad and use their students as laboratory specimens merely to acquire additional publication credits. Unethical research, for the most part, cripples the student, and the task of the educator/researcher is to help students advance academically. To achieve the goal, then, of improving student performance, the research coordinator must first determine four things: 1) the goal of the department with regard to the desired level of student performance, 2) the actual level of student performance, 3) the kinds of deficiencies most common in student writing, 4) any factors which seem to influence performance below the desired level. In the event that all the students are brilliant writers, no further research is called for. If only a small percentage of students do not meet departmental goals, tutorial assistance may suffice. However, when a significant percentage of students fail to meet departmental standards, then a research program is a necessity. First, specific categories of deficiencies must be targeted. Secondly, causes of those deficiencies must be targeted, and causes which are within the remedial power of the instructor should be selected for further study. Finally, the deficiencies and their rectifiable causes should be collated. These collations will serve as basis for hypotheses of research projects to improve student writing.

The actual execution of research projects depends upon the individual instructor or laboratory staff person. As with all research, a significant number of subjects must be selected and relevant data should be collected on each subject. The subjects are then categorized according to similar and dissimilar characteristics. The researcher must decide whether to (a) divide the subjects into experimental and control groups (as with one class as the experimental group and another class as the control group), (b) conduct research with the intent of comparing student proficiency gains with gains of students taught by instructors who use the existing methodology. When the experiment has been completed, all data must be synthesized and summarized into a format which can be used by the administrator.

As the summaries of the separate research projects are received, the administrator evaluates the efficacy of each experiment. If the desired results were not attained in an experiment, the administrator should debrief the researcher to determine the cause, since an unsuccessful experiment may yield information useful in the future. If the result of an experiment was positive, the administrator must make a judgemental determination of whether the success was caused by factors in the hypothesis or by the Hawthorne effect. The results of the viably successful experiments should then be collated for common or similar factors, and a matrix should be constructed of those elements which can be used concurrently. Finally, a list should be compiled of those elements which can most feasibly be used singly.

The next step is to plan and implement a comprehensive program to be synthesized with the existing program. (In some cases complete overhaul of the existing program may be necessary.) The planning of the synthesis can often be best done by committee or by departmental workshop. In this stage, it is important to involve the teaching staff. Their input can be of value in predicting problem areas and in formulating viable plans. Also, faculty tend to be more committed to programs which they themselves formulate. Naturally, caution is required to ensure that the revised program plans will benefit the students rather than the faculty.

The last stage of the research focus is the monitoring of the new program. Instructors should keep systematic notes of problems which arise and of how they handled the problems. The administrator should encourage instructors to bring problems for discussion as they arise. Periodically, a list of problem areas and a list of success areas should be compiled and collated for further study by researchers. At the end of each testing period (whether midterm or final examination), the administrator should have computer personnel tabulate pass-fail ratios and grade level ratios. The combination of instructor input and computer-generated tabulations will serve as monitoring methods.

In short, an administrator who wishes to establish an ongoing program of unified research to improve student writing should carry out the following steps:

1) target appropriate areas of research,
2) have research conducted,
3) collate results of research,
4) plan and implement appropriate changes,
5) monitor the revised writing program.

The Effectiveness of Sentence Combining in Writing Center Classes

Willa Wolcott

This study was undertaken to explore the effect of sentence combining as a composing tool for students in the writing center classes at the University of Florida. Although much has been written about the positive value of sentence combining for college students (Daiker, Kerek, and Morenberg, 1976), little has been said about its impact in the context of a writing center. Yet the small size of our writing center classes, which range from 8-10 students, enables students to receive more individual attention than is possible in most college courses; similarly, the variety of materials available and the "workshop" nature of the laboratory classes themselves differ from many other class settings. Thus, a writing center environment differs enough from the typical college course setting to warrant a closer look at sentence combining within that context.

On the one hand, sentence combining seems ideally suited to a writing center. In stressing the decision-making aspect of the writing process, for example, this approach encourages students to take risks with their writing in much the same way that the writing laboratory authority Mary Croft believes such centers should do[1]. In addition, sentence combining provides a genuine context for the application of punctuation rules and of grammatical concepts such as parallelism; since many writing centers must address these sentence-level skills, providing the opportunity for their application becomes critical. Finally, sentence combining enables students to practice manipulating sentences without being concerned about generating context. For basic writing students, especially those bothered by dialect interference or by second-language problems, such practice can be especially valuable.

But despite these strengths, sentence combining appears to have limitations as a tool for writing centers. Not only did our early attempts to include sentence combining within our center classes result in inconclusive findings, for example, but it has also been difficult for us to provide the constant feedback necessary for effective sentence combining instruction in the walk-in/referral part of our writing center program. That such feedback is essential has been suggested in Frank O'Hare's study in which the teacher's role was successively de-emphasized in favor of class discussion in order for students to develop the confidence necessary for sentence combining[2].

An even more serious limitation is the reservation expressed in some literature about the effectiveness of certain syntactic units, such as T-units and clauses, as the measurement tools for basic writers. Leslie Faigley notes, for example, that the non-standard prose occurring in some basic writing does not readily lend itself to T-unit analysis[3]. His comments are reinforced by the observation in Leslie Freede's study (1976) that Hunt's measurement design, which is used as the basis for most sentence combining evaluation, does not account for black dialect mistakes[4]. Still a similar idea has been expressed by Maimon and Nodine, who caution that while "manipulative ability may produce skilled professional writing, that same ability may produce bureaucratic excesses, jargon, and gobbledygook"; they note, in fact, that students learning to combine sentences often make new errors in the process[5]. Such was the finding in the 1979 sentence combining study of Menendez, whose remedial college students neither showed substantial gain in syntactic maturity nor received higher ratings for their writing on post-tests[6].

Since the majority of students enrolled in our writing center classes are basic writers, these reservations reinforced the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of sentence combining in a few classes before formally including it as a regular part of our overall curriculum. Thus, during the fall of 1982, we introduced sentence combining into four of our laboratory classes and used revision exercises as the alternate approach in the remaining ten laboratory classes.

Students received a letter grade and one credit for their work in the center classes, which were held twice a week and were taught by graduate assistants.

All the writing center classes were allied to, but independent of, the three-credit developmental English course which 74 percent of the students in the study were taking concurrently with the laboratory class. These developmental English classes emphasized global writing skills such as coherence and development, whereas the writing center classes focused on usage and other sentence level skills. Except for the sentence-combining and revision aspects of the writing center curriculum, all students covered identical material in the laboratory course: they worked for ten periods on an individualized grammar program determined from test results; they worked as a group on such common writing problems as consistency of tense and pronouns; and they *wrote four short compositions* about which they conferred individually with their center instructors.

For the experimental portion of the curriculum, the four sentence combining classes spent four weeks or eight periods interspersed throughout the semester on ways to create sentence variety through coordination and subordination, relative clauses, participles, and appositives. The text used was **The Writer's Options: College Sentence Combining** by Daiker, Kerek, and Morenberg (Harper & Row, 1979), supplemented by sentence combining materials developed by the Center coordinator. Since the laboratory classes are by nature a workshop, much of the sentence combining work was done in class with homework assignments limited in scope. Emphasis was placed on class discussion of these exercises.

The control group, while following the same basic curriculum, focused on revision exercises instead of on sentence combining activities. These revision exercises were chosen to reinforce many of the same common writing problems, such as correcting sentence faults, that were addressed as a class. The basic text used was John W. Pressley's **To Be Exact: A Guide for Revision** (Prentice-Hall, 1982). As with the sentence combining group, the text was supplemented with Center-developed revising exercises.

HYPOTHESES

With these slightly different emphases in the curriculum, we felt that several changes might occur:

(1) The sentence combining group might show an increase in those factors, such as T-units and clause length, which are typically used to measure syntactic growth.

(2) If students chose to apply those structures to their own writing, the quality of the sentence combining post-essays might be enhanced since most other variables were controlled.

(3) The control group might perform better on the objective post-grammar test, since those areas tested on the exam were often reinforced in revision exercises.

MEASUREMENT DESIGN

In order to measure any changes occurring in the two groups, pre- and post-forms of an objective test of editing skills were administered to all students during the first and last weeks of the semester; pre- and post-forms of an in-class essay were also administered at that time. These essays were holistically scored at the end of the term to indicate overall quality, and they were analyzed by the Center coordinator for those units measuring syntactic growth.

The study focused only on those college students—46 in all— who took all four forms of the tests. Most of these students, 27 of whom were female and 19, male, were freshmen who had been placed in the writing center course because of low scores (37 or below) on their entering Test of Standard Written English. The test group, which was almost equally balanced between white and black students, included four non-native speakers of English, two of whom

were upperclassmen. The students were randomly assigned to their classes, with the experimental group consisting of 21 students and the control group, 25. Two experienced teaching assistants who were enthusiastic about the sentence combining approach were selected to work with the experimental group, while three other experienced teaching assistants worked with the remaining sections.

Two unforeseen circumstances complicated the study: first, the number of students who took pre- and post-forms of both tests was severely restricted by registration problems at the beginning of the term, a factor which caused many students to enroll late. Second, a family illness forced one of the two sentence combining instructors to leave the University in the middle of the semester. Although an enthusiastic and experienced instructor took her place, some unavoidable upheaval temporarily occurred with the shifting of the teachers.

TESTS

Objective Tests

Pre- and post-forms of the Test of Editing Skills were used to evaluate students' mastery of grammar and usage. These Center-designed objective tests required students to identify possible errors in the underlined parts of given sentences in three sections: the first section tested for possible errors in punctuation and in such usage areas as subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference, and dialect endings; the second section tested for possible spelling errors; and the third section tested for such sentence structure errors as dangling modifiers, faulty parallelism, and fragments.

Since any area on the test that gave particular students difficulty was included in their subsequent program of study, we hoped that improvement would occur on their final grammar test.

Essay Tests

Two forms of the essay exam, each of which contained one question, were given for the pre-test, with alternate forms provided for the post-test. At both test administrations the need for allowing some time to plan and proofread the paper was stressed. The questions are listed below:

Topic D

What reasons were involved in your decision to attend college?

Topic E

What is one strength or weakness in your own high school or college? Include several facts, examples, and details in your discussion to support this one strength or weakness.

The essays were Xeroxed, coded, and mixed for a common holistic scoring at the end of the term so that readers would know neither the date of each essay nor the name of its author. The scoring was done by three Center graduate assistants who had had previous experience holistically scoring several statemandated tests. Although some of the same assistants who taught the classes were also involved in the scoring, care was taken to ensure that none of the instructors were given papers from their own classes. Each paper was scored separately by two readers; the maximum possible score was eight, representing the sum of the two holistic scores, which ranged from one for the lowest score to four for the highest. A fourth teaching assistant, also an experienced holistic scorer, refereed any splits.

Sentenc. Combining Analysis

These same pre- and post-essays were then analyzed by the Center coordinator for indications of syntactic growth. Since the entire analysis was done by one person, the potential inconsistencies of interpretation that can occur in the study of some basic writers' structures were thereby reduced'. The factors assessed were those found in many sentence-combining studies – the

number of T-units, of clauses, of words per clause, of words per T-unit, and of clauses per T-unit. The T-unit, first introduced by Kellogg Hunt in 1965 and later described by Frank O'Hare as the "most sensitive measure of syntactic maturity in schoolchildren" consisted of one main clause and any additional subordinating clause or phrase attached to it[8]. Fragments which were either orthographic or due to a single missing word were counted as T-units; garbled sentences were not tallied. The number of clauses per T-unit was determined by dividing the total number of main and subordinate clauses by the number of T-units. No further breakdown of clauses into such functional categories as noun or adjective clauses was made.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Results of the Objective Tests

Both groups showed comparable improvement on the grammar test. As Table A shows, the sentence combining group improved

Table A
Results of the Grammar Test

	Mean Pre-Test	SD	t-test	Mean Post-Test	SD	t-test	Mean Change	SD
Sentence Combining Group	59.29%	10.42	* .841(NS)	72.33%	10.96	* .792(NS)	13.05%	10.86
Control Group	56.36%	12.75		69.69%	11.54		13.32%	11.18

*NS = Not significant

an average of 13.05 percentage points (**SD** = 10.86), while the control group improved an average of 13.32 percentage points (**SD** = 11.18). A t-test confirmed the lack of a statistically significant difference between the two groups. The range of improvement and/or decline for both groups of students is shown in Table B.

Table B
Degree of Improvement or Decline on Grammar Tests

Sentence Combining Group (N = 21)		Control Group (N = 25)	
Number of Students	**Score in Percentage Points**	**Number of Students**	**Score in Percentage Points**
—	- 16-20	1	- 16-20
—	- 11-15	—	- 11-15
1	- 6-10	1	- 6-10
—	- 1-5	—	- 1-5
2	– 0-5	3	+ 0-5
6	+ 6-10	4	+ 6-10
6	+ 11-15	6	+ 11-15
2	+ 16-20	2	+ 16-20
2	+ 21-25	5	+ 21-25
1	+ 26-30	3	+ 26-30
—	+ 31-35	—	+ 31-35
1	+ 36-40	—	+ 36-40
—	+ 41-45	—	+ 41-45
1	+ 45-50	—	+ 45-50

Results of the Essay Tests

Both the control and experimental groups improved on their essays. Mean pre- and post-essay scores for the sentence combining group were 4.38 (**SD** = 1.82) out of a possible score of 8 and 5.67 (**SD** = 1.89), while mean pre- and post-essay scores for the control group were 3.76 (**SD** = 1.33) and 4.76 (**SD** = 1.13). As Table C indicates, the sentence combining group, which

Table C
Results of Essay Tesst

	Mean Pre-Test	SD	t-test	Mean Post-Test	SD	t-test	Mean Change	SD
Sentance Combining Group	4.38	1.32	* 1.578(NS)	5.67	1.39	** 2.446	1.29%	1.27
Control Group	3.76	1.33		4.76	1.13		1.00	1.41

*NS = Not significant
**Significant because greater than the 2.02 t-table value

initially had scored higher on the pre-essays than had the control group, also performed significantly better on the post essays. A t-test confirmed the statistical significance of the change. Table D depicts the results of the post-essay test.

Table D
Results of the Post-Essays

(Minimum score possible = 2; maximum = 8)

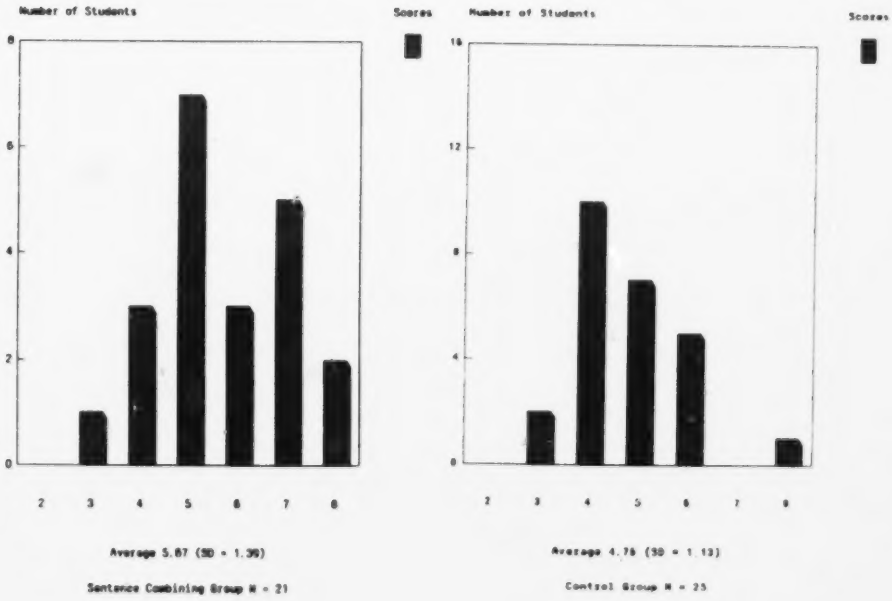
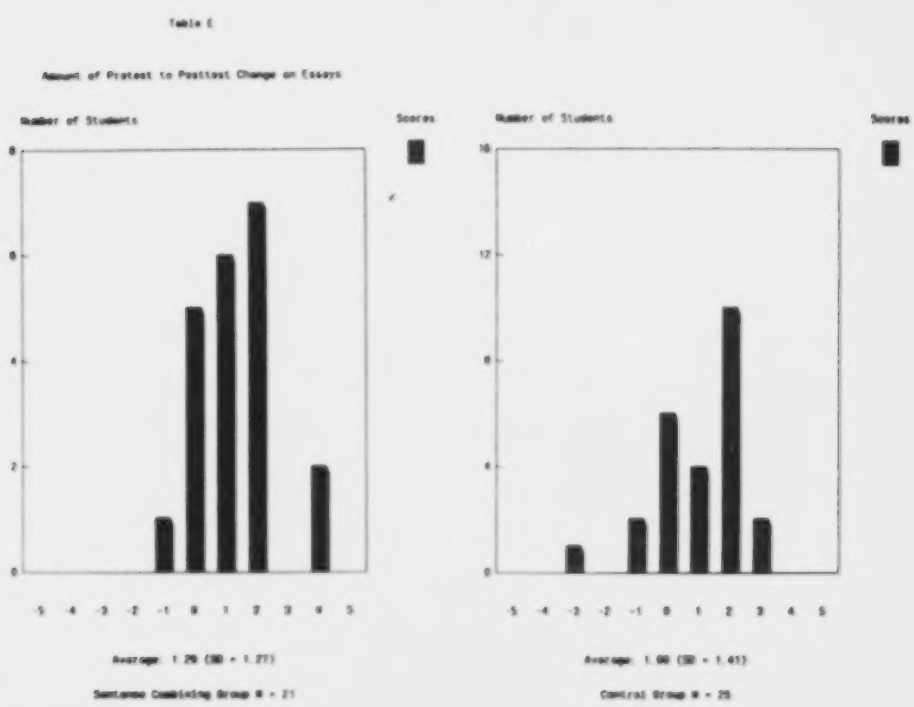


Table E reflects the change of scores for both groups.



This improvement can seemingly be attributed to the impact of sentence combining on students' writing, since the other variables in both the writing center curriculum and the developmental English course were, for the most part, controlled.

Results of the Sentence Combining Analysis

The difference that occurred in the sentence combining post-essays as indicated by holistic scores was not apparent in the analysis of units of sentence maturity. Both the sentence combining group and the control group increased the mean number of T-units and the mean number of clauses they wrote in their post-essays. Although the control group had averaged more clauses in their pre-essays than had the experimental group, there was little statistically significant difference in the number of clauses at the end. Little difference was also reflected between the two groups in the number of T-units averaged on the post-essays.

As Table F indicates, in certain other key measures of

Table F
Mean Pre-Post Change in Measurement Units of Syntactic Growth for Sentence Combining Group

Units	Pre	*SD*	Post	*SD*	Difference	*SD*
No. of T-units	9.52	4.15	14.90	4.22	+ 5.38	4.70
Words per T-unit	17.24	4.28	15.81	3.37	- 1.42	5.02
No. of Clauses	15.57	7.39	24.71	8.97	+ 9.14	10.08
Words per Clause	11.10	3.69	9.67	1.76	- 1.44	3.35
Clauses per T-unit	1.66	.43	1.65	.30	- .01	.49

Mean Pre-Post Change in Measurement Units of Syntactic Growth for Control Group

Units	Pre	*SD*	Post	*SD*	Difference	*SD*
No. of T-units	11.12	6.62	15.84	5.02	+ 4.72	5.06
Words per T-unit	16.52	5.93	15.62	2.74	- .90	5.86
No. of Clauses	19.80	10.42	24.00	8.63	+ 4.20	10.83
Words per Clause	9.64	3.58	10.06	1.88	+ .42	4.50
Clauses per T-unit	1.93	.56	1.54	.34	- .39	.53

syntactic growth, the sentence combining group did not perform statistically better than the control group. For example in the number of words per T-unit, a factor which Frank O'Hare has suggested is the most accurate indicator of syntactic growth*, no substantial difference occurred between the two groups; in fact, both the sentence combining and control groups showed a slight decline in the average number of words per T-unit. Similarly, in another key factor – the number of clauses per T-unit – the statistically significant difference between the two groups at the beginning was closed in the post-essays. That is, even though the control group averaged more clauses per T-unit on the pre-essay than did the sentence combining group, the slight decline that occurred for both groups made them homogeneous in that area on the final papers. Only in the number of words per clause did the two groups reflect a slight difference at the end, and the difference was not in favor of the sentence combining group. Whereas the control group increased their average number of words per clause from 9.64 on the pre-test to 10.06 on the post-test, the sentence combining group declined significantly from 11.10 words per clause on the pre-test to 9.67 words on the post-test. These data suggest, therefore, that the sentence combining group did not differ to any measurable degree from the control group in typical factors of syntactic maturity and that in actual fact, the sentence combining group declined slightly on some measures.

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Only one of the three hypotheses proved valid in this study. That is, the overall quality of the essays as reflected in the holistic scoring was better for the sentence combining group than for the control group. This improvement is encouraging, for holistic scoring by its inclusive nature may be presumed to take into account some errors, such as dialect interference, which are not measured by syntactic units. The gain in overall quality for this group thus served to allay the concern expressed earlier about the limitations of sentence combining in addressing the problems of basic writers.

The other hypotheses, which suggested that more improvement in syntactic growth might occur for the sentence combining group and that more improvement on the grammar test might occur for the control group, did not prove valid. That both groups made comparable improvement on the grammar test is not really surprising, since all students did ten periods of work on individual grammar areas; the revision exercises of the control group were only serving as a reinforcement tool. What is puzzling is the lack of difference that occurred between the sentence combining group and the control group in most measurements of syntactic growth. In fact, in one measurement unit—the number of words per clause—the sentence combining group fared less well than did the control group. In view of the holistic improvement that the sentence combining group made, the lack of growth in syntactic maturity was surprising.

Several reasons may account for this apparent discrepancy. Obviously, the mid-semester change of instructors in two sentence combining classes may have been a deterrent, since continuity is essential in a teaching situation. However, the significance of this factor is mitigated by the similar results which occurred in the other sentence combining classes that had the same instructor all term.

A more important factor may be the actual basis of the sentence combining evaluation itself—the pre- and post-essays. If a controlled-content essay had been used, the syntactic growth might have been more noticeable for the sentence combining students, who would then not have needed to generate content. In Kellogg Hunt's 1970 study, for example, as well as in several studies that have followed, students were given a paragraph about aluminum and were asked to combine the simple, choppy sentences contained in the selection. Through this exercise Hunt and other researchers could isolate how well their students were able to manipulate sentences[10].

Similarly, if we had analyzed more papers from each student for units of syntactic growth, the influence of sentence combining might have been more apparent as well. It might have been especially visible in papers that were not written under time restrictions. This idea was expressed by D.S. Menendez, who, in her sentence combining study, observed that developmental writers often need more time to "master control of the complexities of the writing process" and that test performance may therefore be an inaccurate gauge of writers' abilities[11]. Her comments seem valid, for in a timed situation many basic writers have to struggle with so many aspects of writing, from generating ideas on an assigned topic to expressing them in standard English, that they either cannot or do not experiment with sentence combining structures.

The need for additional time for developmental writers is also indicated in the half-learning of some structures that takes place during experimentation. One student may use a present participle when a past participle is required, while other students may embed their sentences with so many short relative clauses that wordiness results. Such students may reflect the views both of Menendez and of Maimon and Nodine that in some stages of experimentation, additional problems, rather than fewer, occur[12]. These views are further corroborated by Barbara Tomlinson's study with minority college freshmen: after the essay test results failed to support the growth found on a controlled passage, Tomlinson concluded that the 12 hours of sentence combining instruction in the six-week program had not enabled students to pull together the various writing subskills they had learned[13]. The impact of time is also discussed in Mary Ann

Jones's 1979 study of black college freshmen, for Jones suggested that 10 weeks or 20 periods of sentence combining seemed to be an optimal period for effecting syntactic growth[14].

Thus, in view of developmental students' need for more time, the limited number of periods—eight in all—devoted to sentence combining in the writing center classes may be the most important reason why the measurement units did not reflect greater syntactic maturity for the sentence combining group. Furthermore, the workshop nature of the writing center classes, in which only limited amounts of homework were assigned, may have precluded the mastery of those complex structures that require extensive practice.

CONCLUSION

Even though the sentence combining group improved in the overall quality of their essays, their lack of measurable syntactic growth suggests that more time may be needed for sentence combining to make a substantial impact on the basic writing of students in our writing center classes. These findings may have implications for the students using our referral/walk-in program as well. Not only do the latter often spend less time in the Center than do class students, but even with tutorial supervision, the feedback that comes from a peer review or a class discussion of student sentences remains lacking. Hence, even though sentence combining may give students practice in manipulating sentences and may help the more advanced students improve their style, the unstructured setting of a "drop-in" writing center program may limit its effectiveness. In this respect, sentence combining may be one of those areas in which, according to Irvin Hashimoto's view, the different operating style of most writing laboratories is not better than that of the traditional classroom[15].

To acknowledge the need for more time and discussion is not, however, to deny the present value of sentence combining as a helpful adjunct to the other learning components of our writing center curriculum; rather, it is to stress the need for viewing the role of sentence combining in a writing center realistically. While certainly not a panacea, sentence combining does have a place in a laboratory context that values both individual attention and a diversity of materials and techniques. It represents simply a different strategy, one that, like many other approaches, is potentially useful for addressing the varied learning styles of students. Through its emphasis on writing practice and on rhetorical choices, sentence combining provides an alternative composing tool that can, at least to a limited extent within the time restrictions, benefit some basic writers in a writing center environment.

NOTES

[1]Mary Croft, Keynote Address, Southeastern Writing Center Conference, Columbia, South Carolina, 5 Feb. 1981.

[2]Frank O'Hare, **Sentence Combining: Improving Student Writing without Formal Grammar Instruction** (Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1973), p. 45.

[3]Lester Faigley, "Names in Search of a Concept: Maturity, Fluency, Complexity, and Growth in Written Syntax," **College Composition and Communication**, 31 (1980), p. 293.

[4]Leslie Freede, "The Effects of Sentence Combining on Syntactic Maturity in the Writing of Remedial Level College Students," M.A. Thesis, CUNY, 1976, p. 65.

[5]Elaine P. Maimon and Barbara F. Nodine, "Measuring Syntactic Growth: Errors and Ex-

pectations in Sentence-Combining Practice with College Freshmen," **Research in the Teaching of English**, 12 (1978), p. 243.

[6]D. J. Menendez, "The Effect of Sentence-Combining Practice on Remedial College Students' Syntactic Maturity, Punctuation Skills and Reading Ability," Diss. Indiana University, 1978, pp. 104-106.

[7]Barbara MacMichael Tomlinson, "The Influence of Sentence Combining Instruction on the Syntactic Maturity and Writing Quality of Minority College Freshmen in a Summer Pre-entry Preparation Program," Diss. University of California, Riverside, 1980, p. 68.

[8]O'Hare, p. 46.

[9]O'Hare, p. 55.

[10]Maimon and Nodine, p. 233.

[11]Menendez, pp. 104-106.

[12]Maimon and Nodine, p. 243; Menendez, p. 104.

[13]Tomlinson, p. 100.

[14]Mary Ann Jones, "Sentence Combining: Measuring the Rate of Syntactic Growth in Freshman Composition," (Tuskegee, Alabama: Tuskegee Institute College of Arts and Sciences, 1979), p. 19.

[15]Irvin Hashimoto, "Writing Laboratory 'Image' or How Not to Write to Your Dean," **The Writing Center Journal**, 3 (1982), p. 3.

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The Effect of Developmental English Students' Perceptions about the Importance of Writing on their Performance in Composition Classes

Willa Wolcott

A study was undertaken in the Writing Center at the University of Florida to determine whether a relationship exists between Developmental English students' perceptions of the usefulness of writing in their lives and their performance in their composition classes. The issue arises because the progress of these students often varies widely despite the seeming homogeneity of their backgrounds and the similar content of courses they take. For example, students are screened into the Developmental English course and the companion Writing Center course on the basis both of a common cut-off score on the Test of Standard Written English and of student performance on an holistically scored essay; once placed in these courses, students follow highly structured and closely monitored curricula. But in spite of these similarities, post-tests often reveal a wide disparity of results: while some students improve substantially, other students show no change at all, and a few students even appear to decline. The purpose behind this study was, therefore, to ascertain the extent to which attitude might contribute - if at all - to the varying degrees of improvement or decline that can occur in developmental writing.

Previous Research

Much research has been done by Daly and others on writing apprehension and its far-reaching effects on students. For example, as Faigley, Daly, and Witte (1981) found, apprehension can adversely affect students' writing performance, with very anxious writers producing shorter, simpler papers than their less worried peers. Similar results have been obtained by Daly and his colleagues in other contexts. Not only did Daly (1978) find that apprehensive writers scored more poorly on an objective test of grammar and mechanics than did the low apprehensives, but also the degree of writing apprehension which students exhibited affected their choices of courses (Daly and Shamo 1978) and ultimately, of occupations as well (Daly and Miller, 1975).

Despite the far-reaching effects of writing apprehension, Daly notes that the link between attitude toward, and performance in, writing is not strong. For example, he states, "The suggestion has never been made that attitude and performance should be, or are, highly related. Indeed, the overriding emphasis has always been that attitude (as partially represented by the apprehension construct) and aptitude or performance represent relatively separate domains in the area of writing. They should be related, but not at a magnitude much greater than that obtained in the present study" (1978, p. 13). The magnitude to which he refers is a variance of nine percent. This observation seems confirmed as well by Thomas Reigstad, who, in reporting this spring the results of a recent study at SUNY in Buffalo, noted that decreases in writing anxiety were predicted by absenteeism and class sections rather than by improvement in writing performance as measured by holistic and analytic scoring (1985).

Because, as Daly also acknowledges, the apprehension construct represents but part of the overall attitude, one might speculate that those Developmental English students who perceive writing to be an essential skill might make more of an effort to improve - no matter how distasteful the task - than do other basic writers who view writing as not only unpleasant but also unimportant. Certainly the importance of motivation on writing performance has been shown by J. D. Williams and Scott Alden (1983), who recently found that extrinsically moti-

* I am very grateful to Dianne Buhr, the assistant testing and evaluation director for the Office of Instructional Resources, for her invaluable assistance with the statistical analysis.

vated students, unlike their more intrinsically motivated peers, viewed writing as unimportant and did not seek to improve their ability.

Therefore, the following hypothesis was formulated for testing:

> The degree to which Developmental English students perceive writing to be useful or important might affect their performance in writing classes as measured by pre-post essays and objective tests.

Measurement Design and Procedures

As a test of this hypothesis, students enrolled in the three-credit Developmental English course and its one-credit companion Writing Center course were administered a Writing Attitude Questionnaire (See Appendix A) during the middle of the fall term. Similar in format to Daly and Miller's instrument, the questionnaire assessed students' attitudes toward their writing experiences in high school, in their current writing courses, and in their anticipated majors and careers. A few of the 26 items resembled those asked by Daly and Miller, as in the example "I dislike writing, and I am always glad to finish any writing assignment." However, the great majority of items focused on students' perceptions of the utility of writing. In this emphasis on applicability, some items resembled those recently found in the "Writing Attitude Scale" as discussed by Thomas Reigstad and Donald McAndrew in the new NCTE booklet Training Tutors for Writing Conferences (1984). Questions dealing with the utility of writing are illustrated in the following examples:

"I would like to improve my writing because it is an essential skill."

"Writing will probably not play a major role in my life once I graduate."

Items denoting positive or negative attitudes toward writing were interspersed throughout the questionnaire, as were items pertaining to current or future writing experiences. However, none of these categories were designated on the actual questionnaires that students completed.

A scoring procedure was used similar to that with the Daly and Miller instrument. That is, the ratings given by students to the positive questions were added to a base of 78; then the total ratings given by students to the negative questions were subtracted from the combined score. Scores could range from a high of 130 if students agreed very strongly about writing utility to a low of 26 if, conversely, they held very negative views toward the usefulness of writing.

At the end of the term, students' attitude scores were examined in light of the progress they had made in both Developmental English and the Writing Center courses. In the Writing Center classes a pre-post objective Test of Editing skills was administered to measure students' ability to identify errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, spelling, and sentence structure; in the Developmental English classes an in-class expository essay was given. These pre-post essays were subsequently intermingled for an holistic scoring by an independent team of raters. The scoring was done in a controlled setting, with rangefinders and samples from previous readings used to establish a continuity in scoring standards.

For each student a data sheet was then prepared (See Appendix B), containing the student's coded responses to the attitude questionnaire, the difference in pre-and post-grammar scores, and the difference in pre- and post-essay scores. The sixty-five students on whom all five pieces of information were available comprised the subjects of this study. Thirty were male, thirty-five, female; most were minority freshmen specially admitted to the University with SAT scores below 840 and Test of Standard Written English scores of 37 or below.

Results

The 65 students were subsequently grouped into the following categories according to their test results. The largest group (Group A), containing 30 students, improved on both the editing and essay tests. The second largest group (Group B), 17 students in all, improved on the editing

test but declined in their essay scores. The third group (Group C), consisting of 14 students, improved on the editing test but showed no change in essay scores. The two students comprising Group D declined on the editing test but improved on the essay, while the two remaining students (Group E) showed no improvement on either test.

The mean scores for the total writing attitudes of the five groups are listed in Table 1. An analysis of variance test (ANOVA) of the hypothesis found no significant difference in the attitude scores among the various groups [F = 4,60) = 1.85;P = .13].

Table 1

	Mean Attitude Score	Standard Deviation
Group A (Improved on both tests) N = 30	92.43	9.14
Group B (Improved on Editing but declined on Essay) N = 17	89.29	10.68
Group C (Improved on Editing but did not change on Essay score) N = 14	89.71	10.21
Group D (Declined on Editing but improved on Essay score) N = 2	82.50	3.53
Group C (No improvement and/or no charge on both tests) N = 2	106.00	16.97

Even when the Writing Attitude totals were divided into the subsets of attitudes toward the usefulness of writing in the past, in the present, and in the future, the mean scores reflected little significant difference.

Furthermore, as noted in Table 2, Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficients showed virtually no relationship between the Writing Attitude Total of students and their performances on either the essay tests or the objective Tests of Editing Skills; this finding was not surprising in view of the little variance in attitude scores among the various groups. The only correlations

that were at all meaningful were those between the total attitude scores and the pre-grammar tests or between the subset "Attitude toward Writing in the Present" and pre- and post-objective test scores. However, these correlations were very low - at the level of .26 or .25; moreover, no significant correlation at all was found between writing attitude and essay scores.

TABLE 2

Correlation Coefficients*

	Total attitude Score	Pre-Grammar Score	Post-Grammar Score	Pre-Essay Score	Post-Essay Score	Attitude toward Writing in the Past	Attitude toward Writing in the Present	Attitude toward Writing in the Future
Total Attitude Score	1.00 .00	.25* .041	.22 .074	.02 .891	.07 .572	.43* .0001	.81* .0001	.74* .0001
Pre-Grammar Score	.25* .041	1.00 .000	.51* .0001	.34* .001	.22 .084	.12 .348	.25* .041	.125 .321
Post-Grammar Score	.22 .074	.51* .000	1.00 .0000	.32* .010	.27* .031	.15 .301	.26* .034	.09 .467
Pre-Essay Score	.02 .891	.34* .001	.32* .010	1.000 .000	.34* .006	.040 .770	.01 .921	.04 .782
Post-Essay Score	.07 .572	.22 .084	.27* .031	.34* .006	1.000 .000	.03 .790	.06 .612	-0.02 .848
Attitude toward Writing in the Past	.43* .001	.12 .348	.15 .301	.04 .770	.03* .790	1.000 .00	.26* .040	.21 .091
Attitude toward Writing in the Present	.81* .0001	.25* .041	.26* .034	.01 .921	.06 .612	.26* .040	1.00 .000	.44 .000
Attitude toward Writing in the Future	.74 .000	.13 .321	.09 .467	.03 .782	-0.02 .848	.21 .092	.44* .000	1.00 .000

*Significant at alpha < .5

Correlation coefficients are rounded to the nearest hundredth

Finally, an item analysis of the questionnaire revealed a full range of responses occurring for all questions except for number 6. No one responded with a rating of 3 (uncertain) or a rating of 2 (disagree) to the statement "I would like to improve my writing because it is an essential skill." All the other items elicited, to varying degrees, a full range of ratings.

Conclusion and Implications

Thus, there is insufficient evidence to accept the hypothesis, for students' perceptions of the usefulness of writing have little bearing on their writing performances. That is, the writing attitudes of the group that improved on both measurements did not significantly differ from the attitudes of those students who showed either no change at all or a decline in their writing. Whatever motivational factors may have contributed to the progress - or lack thereof - which some students demonstrated in their writing performances, these elements did not include student attitudes toward the importance of writing.

Such a finding should not be altogether surprising in that students' attitudes to writing do not seem clearly defined at this stage of their lives, and another administration of the questionnaire might very well have elicited different responses from the same students. Moreover, the test sample was small and the reliability of the instrument itself in need of further clarification. Nevertheless, this ambiguity or inconclusiveness of student attitudes toward writing serves to

confirm Daly's observation noted earlier about the lack of a substantial relationship between writing attitudes and actual performance.

To acknowledge the seeming unimportance of students' attitudes toward writing on the effectiveness of the compositions that result is not, however, to suggest that attitude should be disregarded altogether. For developmental students in particular, many of whose writing experiences have been infrequent and unsuccessful, effecting a change in attitude would seem desirable. More effort could, or should, be made to convey to these students for whom writing is so often a source of extreme anxiety the true significance of writing skills. For example, helping students to see that writing is important in the world of work, even in those disciplines often not associated with verbal skills, such as engineering, may make their mastery of writing skills seem more significant. Similarly, focusing on those larger skills - organization, clarity of purpose, and audience - that are essential both in their college careers and in their prospective jobs afterward should make students' writing tasks more meaningful to them (Aldrich, p. 285). Even more important, assisting students in seeing that, as Donald Graves has indicated, "Writing is most important not as etiquette, not even as a tool, but as a contribution to the development of a person, no matter what that person's background and talents" (p. 62) should be a vital part of the curriculum.

Certainly student attitudes toward the usefulness of writing will be changed neither by a few lectures nor by a single writing course. However, students can receive a strong message from a class that emphasizes not only the extrinsic importance of writing skills, but also the intrinsic value of grappling with the writing process in order to clarify and communicate ideas. As developmental students begin to write more themselves, to gain confidence in their work, and to see the larger significance of what they do, a link may possibly be found between more positive student attitudes toward writing and an improved quality within the writing itself.

Appendix A

WRITING QUESTIONNAIRE

Name _____ Date_____
Last, First

Age_____ Race_____ Class_____

Is this your first term in college?_____

Have you had a writing course at this university before?_____

Are you taking a **reading** course now?_____

The following questions ask you about your attitudes to writing. Please respond **honestly** by checking the category that best describes your reaction to the statement listed.
Note: Your answers will not affect your work in courses you are now taking.

		5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Uncertain	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Agree
- P 1.	Writing was never emphasized during my high school days.					
+ P 2.	During high school I was required to write either a book report, an essay, or a short paper almost every month.					
+ P 3.	My English classes during high school should have required me to do more writing.					

*Note: The **P** refers to past writing experiences, the **N** to current writing experiences, and the **F** to future experiences. The pluses and minuses denote statements that reflect positive or negative attitudes toward writing. None of the labels existed on the questionnaires given the students.

		5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Uncertain	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
- P 4.	Before this year, I never wrote many letters for personal reasons.					
+ N 5.	College freshmen should be required to take writing courses.					

+N 6. I would like to improve my writing because it is an essential skill.

- N 7. I would never have chosen to take a writing course at college.

+N 8. I am pleased with the progress that I have made in my current writing course.

- N 9. My main goal in my writing course is to get a better grade.

+N 10. Because writing is important to me, I spend at least two hours on each assignment.

+N 11. I write better on essays done outside class rather than on essays done in class because I can spend more time on the assignments.

+N 12. The emphasis that my writing course has placed on both pre-writing and revision has helped my work to improve.

+N 13. I make many changes in my papers before I turn them in.

- N 14. I dislike having my writing graded.

- F 15. I would never choose a major that requires much writing.

- F 16. Writing will probably not play a major role in my life once I graduate.

- N 17.	I have great difficulty in organizing my ideas.
- N 18.	My frequent mistakes in grammar hurt my writing grades.
- N 19.	My most common mistakes are in punctuation and spelling.
+ N 20.	I often write letters to family and friends.
+ F 21.	Writing will probably be an important skill for me in the rest of my college work.
+ F 22.	Writing will probably be essential for the major I am likely to choose.
- N 23.	I dislike writing, and I am always glad to finish any writing assignment.
- N 24.	I do not like to have other students read my papers.
+ F 25.	I will probably have to write memos, reports, or similar documents in my future career.
- F 26.	In the future I am likely to conduct my personal affairs by telephone rather than by writing.

Appendix B

WRITING ATTITUDE STUDY

Student Name _____

The number of the column students have checked is recorded beside the designated question.

	PAST		NOW		FUTURE	
Question	+	-	+	-	+	-
		1)	5)			15)
	2)		6)			16)
	3)			7)	21)	
		4)	8)		22)	
				9)	25)	
			10)			26)
			11)			
			12)			
			13)	14)		
				17)		
				18)		
				19)		
			20)			
				23)		
Total				24)		
from *each column*	+	-	+	-	+	-

Add together the plus totals: _____

Combine the plus totals with + 78 for a combined score _____

Add together the negative totals _____

Subtract the negative total from the combined score _____

Attitude total _____

Pre-Grammar Score _____ Pre-Essay Score _____

Post-Grammar Score _____ Post-Essay Score _____

\+ _____ + _____

Difference - _____ Difference - _____

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A Teaching Learning Center: Writing, Peer Tutoring, and Self-Directed Learning

Mary E. Willingham

Mercer University's Teaching Learning Center in Atlanta can perhaps best be conceptualized as a series of bridges between student and teacher, between academically weak student and gifted student, between one faculty member and another, between one discipline and another discipline but finally and most important—a center which is a bridge over and over again between our old self and our new self.

Now, bridges are lovely, but they must be properly constructed, and our Teaching Learning Center, like many centers, relies upon peer tutoring and collaborative learning as the primary teaching resources. Supervision and training of tutors, whether they are to be used in the classroom or in a learning center thus becomes a major and central function of any tutorial center. If such a center is not available, the classroom teacher must assume the role of trainer and supervisor, but the value of a learning center cannot be overemphasized. Collaborative learning does not simply happen. Students who work as tutors must understand something of learning theory, they must know their subject matter, and they must know something of teaching techniques. I would propose that the most important of these three areas is the first one. Without an understanding of how people learn and what kind of environment is absolutely essential in order for learning to take place, all the instructions, materials, and exercises in the world will be of little help.

The concept of one student helping another, although as old as learning itself, has within the past decade or so become the subject of growing interest and research. The National Science Foundation supported a study of tutoring programs, the results of which were presented in the American Educational Research Journal, Summer, 1982. Those results were unequivocal: "The message from the educational literature on tutoring programs seems clear enough. These programs have definite and positive effects on the academic performance and attitudes of those who receive tutoring. Tutored students outperformed their peers on examinations, and they expressed more positive attitudes toward the subjects in which they were tutored. Tutoring programs also had positive effects on students who served as tutors. These tutors not only developed more positive attitudes towards the subjects that they were teaching, but they also gained a better understanding of these areas . . . tutoring benefits both tutors and tutees on both the cognitive and affective levels." Research thus supports and defines the benefits to be derived from peer tutoring or collaborative learning as the concept is sometimes called. However, these positive effects cannot happen without a comprehensive and carefully developed structure. There are three areas that tutors must study and understand if they are to be of significant help to their students.

1. Tutors must learn the dynamics of the "one on one" educational relationship, and they must be able to put their knowledge into practice.
2. Tutors must learn the fundamental principle and theory of their subject matter. In other words, they must learn about the fields of reading, writing, and speaking.
3. Tutors must learn the appropriate pedagogy for presenting and conveying both theoretical and practical knowledge.

Like all meaningful human relationships, the tutoring relationship is intimate, delicate, and dynamic. Tutor training can provide a structured and necessary base for understanding and appreciating this valuable educational tool. It is vital that tutors learn about the nature of teaching and learning, the depth, complexity, and joy of the English language, and the relationships

among various theories of discourse, motivation, and competency. With this in mind, Mercer University's new course entitled Tutoring Practicum was designed with a special emphasis on the theories and works of two psychologists: Carl Rogers and Sidney Jourard. Tutors of course are taught basic writing and reading instruction. They review grammar, essay construction from brainstorming to perfected product, research paper and library skills, spelling improvement techniques, protocol analysis of reading comprehension, oral presentation techniques, and anything else they need to **know** in order to understand the subject matter of language arts tutoring. But knowing this kind of information is at best only half of the process of becoming a successful tutor. The other half (or, indeed, an even greater percent) of this process has to do with the psychology of personhood and learning theory. It is my contention, as designer of a tutoring practicum, that without a thorough understanding and appreciation of these two elements, tutors will never be truly successful no matter how much grammar they know, no matter how well they themselves write, read, and speak, and no matter how many handouts, cassette tapes, or programed workbooks they have access to. For, more basic to tutoring than the transfer of information is the transfer of self awareness, self worth, self direction, and mystery. The sense of mystery must be conveyed because the ultimate power of language, learning, and imagination remains and probably always will remain one of life's grand mysteries.

There are many psychological and learning theories which can be applied to tutoring and which can be very worthwhile. Ideas from Maslow's hierarchy, Berne's transactional analysis, Bandura's and Wolpe's behavior modification, Piaget, Vygotsky, and a host of other fine theorists can and should be taught to tutors, but of supreme benefit to tutors is the study of Carl Rogers and Sidney Jourard.

Carl Rogers in his book **On Becoming a Person** extrapolates from his knowledge and experience of counseling to an educational situation. His belief is that the same basic principles apply to both encounters because he sees them both as learning experiences. In general Rogers discusses his principles as they might be applied to classroom environments, and in doing so, he admits that this extrapolation may be a difficult endeavor primarily because of deeply embedded cultural expectations that society has for the teacher and the classroom and that the teacher has for herself or himself—expectations which involve such things as memorization, acquisition of factual material, lectures, and examinations—the latter often being used as a club. However, these problems of transfer are not nearly so apparent in a tutorial setting. It is obvious that a tutoring encounter clearly resembles a counseling encounter, and it is for this reason that Roger's principles apply so well. There are five basic conditions which must be met for successful counseling to take place:

> When the client perceives himself as faced by a serious and meaningful problem;
>
> When the therapist is a congruent person in the relationship, able to be the person he is;
>
> When the therapist feels an unconditional positive regard for the client;
>
> When the therapist experiences an accurate empathetic understanding of the client's private world, and communicates this;
>
> When the client to some degree experiences the therapist's congruence, acceptance, and empathy (Rogers, 1961, p. 285).

From an examination of these conditions, it would be reasonable to make an immediate parallel with the tutoring experience. Indeed, one could easily substitute the word "tutor" for "therapist" and the word "tutee" or "student" for "client" (althought "client" could serve just as well in the tutoring session). Tutors, then, must first study these principles rationally and intellectually; however, the next step is truly the critical one (and one which not all tutors are able to

make). The successful tutor must come to an emotional understanding of these five conditions or principles; he or she must begin to own them, make them a part of his or her very being. It is only at this point that successful tutoring can really take place. When the tutor can be open and accepting of his or her own feelings and ideas as well as those of the student who wishes to be tutored, and when the tutor can not only feel a real and genuine caring for the student, but convey that concern and regard as well, then a significant transfer of inspiration and initiative can perhaps take place. With the assistance of a sensitive tutor, the student with the problem can take charge of his or her own learning.

Sidney Jourard's contribution to this process is the addition of a sixth principle or condition to Roger's list. One might argue that Jourard's principle is really a technique, but either way, it is significant for tutor training. Jourard begins his book **The Transparent Self** by noticing that "a choice that confronts every one of us at every moment is this: Shall we permit our fellow men to know us as we now are, or shall we seek instead to remain an enigma, an uncertain quantity, wishing to be seen as something we are not?" According to this theory, in order to grow and learn one must allow another or others to know oneself. And, for Jourard, this sharing of oneself can only take place in a sharing atmosphere. Hence, the tutor must provide that atmosphere by being the model sharer. In other words, tutors must be trained to share their experiences—successes, failures, hopes and plans. If the tutor models this behavior the student can feel free to share (and thereby claim) some of his or her experiences and feelings. That is also the beginning of growth and learning. This sharing of experiences and feelings is, not surprisingly, of as much benefit to the tutor as to the tutee. As Jourard states, "it seems to be another empirical fact that no man can come to know himself except as an outcome of disclosing himself to another person" (Jourard, 1964, p. 5). In a counseling environment, Jourard contends that if the therapist does not learn and grow, probably no significant change has occurred in the client. It is the contention of this speaker that tutors must somehow come to understand the significance of self-disclosure, and that whoever trains tutors must be their model as the tutors in turn will be the models for their students.

In summary, there are several things that can be profitably said about collaborative learning and peer tutoring. First is the importance of focusing on the language arts, and particularly writing, as a means of actually learning how to think and learn. Second, it is important to the collaborative endeavor to view writing as a process. Third, in order to transmit these ideas to the faculty and administration of any academic institution, provide a place for research and dialogue, and train tutors, a learning center of some sort must be set up. Peer tutoring can occur in a learning center or in a classroom, but for collaborative learning to be truly effective, the principles of Carl Rogers and Sidney Jourard (along with all the other more technical kinds of information) must somehow be instilled in those who would call themselves tutors. Our tutors are generally young people who are perhaps easier to train than teachers are to retrain. There is an appropriate quotation from Sidney Jourard in which only the words therapy, therapist, and patient have been changed. Jourard says:

> I have come gradually to see [tutoring], not as a setting in which one person, the [tutor], does things to a [student], manipulating the relationship, the [student's] behavior, or his own . . ., but rather as a relationship that can be described in Buber's (1937) terminology—namedly, an honest relationship gradually developing into one of I and Thou; a dialogue in which growth of both parties is an outcome (Jourard, 1964, p. 67).

The task of training a tutor is never finished, in the same way the mastery of teaching is never finally accomplished. However, a good learning center always provides a place for

dialogue – a dialogue among faculty, among students and between faculty and students. Because the entire academic community should be a place of collaborative learning, it would seem wise to provide a place where we, as collaborators, can study and learn about this process. Students and teachers are, in a final analysis, as Kenneth Bruffee puts it, "an association of learners," and perhaps we must begin to learn how to learn from one another. We hope that Mercer's Teaching Learning Center can provide this kind of atmosphere and structure, and perhaps serve as a model for other learning centers.

Any learning center, to be true to its name and to be effective, must be founded upon a sense of individual integrity – that is, respect for the **personhood** of all those who walk through the doors.

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The Joys and Rewards of Recruiting and Implementing a Volunteer Tutorial Staff

Ina H. Steinberg

Every writing center director at one time or another has fantasized about a Writing Center Promised Land. We all dream wistfully about it, seeing it as what should be. Share a vision with me for a few minutes:

Look at the educational hardware, lined up in neat rows within a suite of large, cheery rooms. Here is everything that a center needs, from "quite" rooms for testing to large cubicles that allow for student/tutor conferences.

And students? Rows and rows of eager faces, receptive to all suggestions, willing to work additional hours in order to learn as much as possible. Their gratitude is often overwhelming, as evidenced in the stacks of grateful letters which the center receives.

And tutors? Because there are more of them than any center can possibly use, students receive as many hours of one-on-one help as they need. As for the ability of the staff in the Promised Land, all hold graduate degrees in student development and growth as well as in rhetoric and composition.

Here in the Promised Land, writing center directors are welcomed wherever they go. In fact, journeys across campus are much like royal progresses, with both praise and flowers strewn across our paths. Administrators love us, for improved retention rates are directly attributable to our ability to make acceptable college students out of any raw recruits—and all within one semester. As for admissions officers, they adore us, for note how we have enlarged their recruiting possibilities. Because of us, all types of students are fair game for recruitment, ranging from learning disabled, emotional problems, non-English speakers, and under-achievers. Remember, writing centers in the Promised Land are places where miracles do take place—and quickly too.

Faculty? As they pass us, their cries of gratitude and awe are usually loud ones. Once more the classroom has become a place for real teaching, as they say. No more surly students, no more student illogic or illiteracy. Remember, writing centers send motivated and skilled students back into the classroom—and quickly too.

Finally, as each day ends in the Promised Land, we directors close the doors to our centers, ending another day of help, breathing a sigh of contentment, smiling beatifically, and murmuring a soft, "All is good."

A lovely dream, but not reality. If you are in a position similar to mine, problems such as facilities, staffing, and student remediation, motivation, and development are areas in which you are still scrambling for answers. However, I do have some specific ideas to share with you—ideas that I believe will improve one aspect of our centers and lead us a few steps closer to the Promised Land.

First of all, I would venture to guess that all of us look upon the individual conferencing aspect as the most vital ingredient of any writing program. As we all know, frequent private sessions with a student afford the opportunities which we need to reshape a student's processes of thinking, generating ideas, organizing, and editing. However, the practicalities of such individualized help are often more than our budgets will bear. What I would like to suggest to you today is a way whereby you can have all the talented tutoring staff you will ever need, and all without having to use one penny of your budget. Lest you think that we are once again back in a dream, let me hasten to tell you that there is a way and that it is in use at the writing center which I direct.

One year and a half ago, I faced a dismal prospect. Either I found another way to handle the increased load in students using the center, or I would have to start turning students away. Part of my problem was that I had been an excellent publicist, too excellent, for now that

the faculty and the students knew about the functions of the center, my small staff of two part time, paid paraprofessionals was not sufficient to handle the numbers we faced, if we were to provide the kind of time-consuming help that was necessary.

Out of desperation and from the vantage of an empty pocketbook, I assessed my needs. I realized that I would never settle for anything less than skilled tutorial help, for I had eliminated the possibility of peer tutoring, having tried it before and having discovered that for me it was a risky proposition that was unpredictable and difficult to supervise. I needed volunteers—in the field or retired—who knew how to write and secondly, who knew how to teach. As I thought more about this, enlisting a corp of volunteer skilled writers became a viable prospect. At the least, it offered me a way out of my understaffed and financially impoverished situation.

Now, after having had the program in place for a reasonable amount of time I can tell you without reservation that it works, and works well. Let me share with you some details of an idea that probably hasn't been used more frequently only because it is so basic that most of us have ignored it.

If you are as unaware of the composition of your community as I was then, you probably have never given much thought to those retirees within your area. What do you think happens to people such as retired English teachers, training supervisors, professors, or even freelance writers? Have you ever thought about how they fill those hours after retirement? Admittedly, some take jobs, and for pay, too, although those aren't the ones that I could afford. However, a large number of them are financially secure, unwilling to go back into the workaday employee/employer relationship, whatever the reason, and yet anxious to keep busy at something which they believe contributes to the wellbeing of the community. As I have learned, one cannot underestimate the sincere desire of the senior citizen to pass learning on to the younger generation. It is a very strong desire, particularly within retired teaching professionals, as I have observed.

I began my recruitment campaign by placing articles in the various community publications that disseminated information to senior citizens. In these articles I explained the writing philosophy of our university and asked readers who had taught writing or who had been writers to contact me if they wished to do any volunteer tutoring. I had no idea whether there would be a response, and, if so, how much. Imagine my astonishment when I received over 20 applications within two weeks! As I have learned, however, not all applicants are tutor caliber, although my success rate so far has been high; I estimate that 80% of the applicants have become excellent assets to our tutoring staff.

Because I was hesitant to allow tutors to work with students until I was certain that they were capable, I constructed screening and training phases that would allow me to find out much about the experience and the personalities of the applicants. Naturally, the first step is to spotcheck references. Following this, I meet with them individually to learn more about them and their ability to relate to students. I find this screening to be a vital step, for writing center tutors are a special breed: even more so than classroom teachers, they must enjoy the close contact they will have with students, for nothing destroys the effectiveness of a writing center more than tutors who can't make students feel at ease and comfortable.

Once they have passed the screening phase, prospective tutors are asked to attend a two-hour training session in which I discuss our student population and the structure of our tutorial sessions. One technique which I have found very helpful for this session consists of distributing actual student history folders containing testing scores and writing samples and discussing with the tutors teaching strategies for each situation. Following this session, those applicants who show the qualities which we are looking for are asked to continue with us by observing an actual tutor/student conference which either I or the paraprofessionals conduct. After the student has left, we critique the sessions, answering any questions the tutors might have.

Only after these steps have been taken is a tutoring schedule established for the new tutor. Such scheduling is no easy matter, and I have learned through my mistakes to approach it very carefully. As I have discovered, tutoring is much like the child adoption process, for the more effort put into the matching, the more successful the results. I've learned that personality blending is very important: If Janey Jones has a learning style that is rebellious and undirected and tutor Florence Thomas is a rigid traditionalist, the chemistry of their interaction won't be right for either of them. On the other hand, the directive personality of Mrs. Thomas might be just what student Sam Smith needs. Of all the supervising tasks I undertake, none is more important than that of observing how the tutorial sessions are progressing, and I am quick to make changes when and if they are needed.

Of our tutors, approximately 75% have had teaching experience on the secondary school level, with an additional 10% having taught at the middle school level. Such experience has proven to be a valuable asset for the writing center, for it provides us with tutors who know how and when to teach developmental writing and reading skills. Because of this, the writing center is able to maintain a high level of accountability for student proficiency skills. Let me explain. The center is responsible for administering a diagnostic/prescriptive competency testing sequence at the beginning of each semester to all entering freshman and transfer students, and then sectioning the students. All students who score low in SAT scores, reading scores, and writing scores are placed within developmental sections. Students within these sections are required to take entrance and exit proficiency tests as well as to participate in a one-half hour tutorial session each week. Thus from the first day of the semester, tutors are involved very closely in monitoring each student's academic development. It is most interesting to observe the bonding that takes place between the student and tutor in such a structured program. In most instances, very close friendships develop. Thus, for those students who need one, a surrogate mother or father is available. Having someone who cares and who wants to help often provides the difference for a marginal student between passing and failing. Many times students will ask for additional time with their tutors. When this happens, it is an indication to me that the program is working and that the tutor is providing that element of intellectual give and take that is integral to real learning.

One other real advantage of a volunteer tutoring program is the versatility which it provides. I have learned to structure writing center workshops around the skills of my tutors. For example, one tutor uses his Ph.D. skills in history and his love for research to good advantage by advising upper-level students about their research projects. Another tutor who has had much high school teaching experience in ESL holds weekly workshops for adult upper level and graduate students for whom English is the second language. Within this workshop the tutor is able to identify and remediate the writing problems of foreign students very quickly. Let me give you another example of the program's versatility. In our first meeting, one prospective tutor asked me rather shyly if I would have any use for the extensive experience she had amassed in teaching elementary development reading skills. Before she knew what was happening, I had established a schedule of student contacts for her. As of now, we have a waiting list for the reading sessions she conducts.

As you can probably tell from my words, I believe very strongly that the individual tutoring session is the most important function of a writing center. As far as I am concerned, all the hardware and all the texts that money can buy cannot equal the value of a regularly scheduled individual student-tutor conference. The poor writing we receive from our students—the absence of logic, style, or interest—all of these result from the lack of individual attention to their writing which our students have received during their school careers.

Let me hasten to add that a volunteer program of tutoring is not foolproof, but then, in

education, what is? It does require continual supervision and constant tinkering. Not all who apply have either the ability or the personality to be effective tutors. And, at times, I have made mistakes in my choices for tutors. However, as soon as I observe that someone isn't providing the level of tutoring that I expect, I have learned that I must quickly separate that person from the writing center.

I must confess that the selection, training, and supervision aspects of a volunteer program are time consuming, for as director, it is also my responsibility to let these people who volunteer their time and their love so freely know how much the university appreciates them. That appreciation and interest in them and what they are doing has to be there on my part; in return, my volunteers teach me a great deal. The information that only they can extract from the special relationships which they have with students is often indispensable if a writing center is to meet the needs of the student community.

For all of us, each day at the center is a busy one. However, by the end of each semester, I can look back at the many contributions which the tutors have made. As a gesture of appreciation to our tutors, we hold an end-of-the-year banquet at which we present a certificate to each tutor. After our dinner last year, one tutor best expressed the message that I leave you with today by stating that the real reward she received was the gratitude her students expressed. That warmth, that indefinable factor of caring, that is what volunteer tutoring is all about. And that, indeed, is the closest that I have ever been able to come to the Writing Center Promised Land.

The Peer Tutor as Principal Benefactor in the Writing Center, or It Isn't Just for Teaching English Anymore

Elizabeth S. Bell

No writing center can perform successfully with a poorly trained or unprepared staff. In a very literal sense, the effectiveness of the writing center depends on the quality of its tutors. As a result we require many kinds of skills, competencies, and attitudes from our tutors, as Joyce Steward and Mary Croft point out in **The Writing Laboratory: Organization, Management, and Methods** (1982). They list six philosophical commitments that are fundamental for any lab teacher. Although they are quite accurate, their statements are deceptively simple. For example, one posits the undeniable basic premise that lab staff members should be committed to teaching writing as a process; others of the six statements are just as indispensable and primary, but the implications that follow from them are, nevertheless, quite momentous. Inherent in these commitments is the underlying assumption that the writing tutor can function as diagnostician, teacher, facilitator, evaluator, audience—handling such diverse concerns as analyzing student writing, discovering the most effective means of dealing with each student, confronting student writing anxiety, evaluating stages of the writing process, knowing when to intervene and when to let a student struggle, and deciding whether a face-to-face conference or a small group discussion would be more effective in a given situation. These are rather sophisticated skills, yet writing centers across the nation are training staff members, many of whom are undergraduate peer tutors, to fulfill these roles.

To date, most research and scholarship on the peer tutor has centered on the vital issues of training and evaluating. Muriel Harris's **Tutoring Writing** (1982), for example, offers valuable suggestions for both, and its essays reinforce, time and again, the need for flexibility and competence in the lab staff. Yet there is another issue, more rarely examined, which has far-reaching implications, not only for the peer tutor, but also for the writing center's relationship to the university as a whole: In addition to all of its other services, the writing center offers its trained staff professional skills that can be advantageous in careers ranging from the traditionally-related one of teaching to the more unfamiliar ones of business and other professions. If we, as English faculty members and/or writing center administrators, fail to capitalize on these side effects of the writing center's performance, we not only commit a disservice to our tutors, but we also devalue the writing center's role as a learning center for the university's total program. While improving our client's writing skills and attitudes must remain our primary objective—for it is our reason for being—we can provide services that have unexpected applications in a variety of disciplines and can benefit our tutors regardless of their majors or chosen careers. We offer a unique framework for training competent professionals with very marketable skills, capable of fulfilling the growing leadership needs of our increasingly complex society. It is time we made the university, the employment community, and potential staff members aware of this.

Traditionally, most peer tutors have been either English or English education majors, planning to move from college to graduate school or to teaching. Writing center staff experience can be helpful in both cases. First of all, tutors who intend to pursue graduate degrees have an advantage when applying for assistantships, for they already have firsthand practical experience in conveying content and developing skills in other students. In a recent interview, a former peer tutor from our program credited her tutoring experience with easing her adjustment to her current role as graduate teaching assistant. Some of her colleagues, without comparable experience or training, have expressed difficulty in conducting one-on-one conferencing with students. They have been, to an extent, overwhelmed by the new demands of evaluator, authority figure, and diagnostician placed on them. Our former tutor, however, could enter her new

responsibilities with self-confidence about her relationship to freshman students, for she had had the chance to learn how to work with them in the non-punitive atmosphere of the tutorial.

Those tutors who plan to enter the teaching profession as soon as they receive their undergraduate degrees also gain practical experience in adjusting to the learning styles and limitations of a variety of students. Because in the tutorial they must deal on a face-to-face basis with their students' confusion and lack of comprehension, without the blunting effect a classroom full of too many students can provide, the lessons they learn about teaching from tutoring are more vivid and immediate than classroom practice teaching alone can ever be. Peer tutors become adept at innovative approaches to editing or composing or spelling because they receive immediate feedback from their clients demonstrating just how effective their explanations have been. This is valuable training for any potential teacher.

In addition, both graduate students and teachers can gain in another way from their association with the writing center. If they have participated in a well-structured training program, they have been introduced, directly or indirectly, to current theories for teaching composition. They are, thus, ideologically prepared to value the process approach to writing. Stephen North, who has long been an advocate of tutor training programs, encourages this process by giving his tutors lists of kinds of tutorials, such as invention/discovery, revising, or editing, which are based on both the student's "location" in the writing process and her "intention" for the piece of writing ("Training Tutors to Talk About Writing," CCC [December 1982]). Essentially, then, the writing center becomes a laboratory from the tutors' perspectives, for it provides them with the opportunity to put theory to practice, to see the actual uses of heuristics or of revision techniques or the real applications of audience awareness. School administrators, as potential employers, should be made aware of this experience, for it can dramatically influence classroom effectiveness in new teachers.

We, as faculty members and part of the university, usually acknowledge the tutor's exposure to instructional-based skills which lend themselves easily and logically to the graduate school or the teaching profession, but we sometimes fail to notice the potential extensions of these skills to the business or professional world. One of our writing center's former tutors is now a personnel director for a national carpet company. Her duties require her to work with a spectrum of situations from informal interviews with disgruntled employees to presentations before colleagues or supervisors to, occasionally, formal legal and contractual representations of company policy. She finds two elements of her tutorial experiences of value in her current position: 1.) In the writing center she developed "contact skills" which enabled her to work comfortably with people of different backgrounds and levels of competence. This allowed her to overcome any fear or inhibition when working with people, regardless of their degree of literacy, and to help them understand the communication process. 2.) She also developed the ability to be flexible or to "think on her feet," which she finds extremely useful for the variety of problems she must solve each day.

In effect,our former tutor has defined her experiences in the writing center in terms of learning how to achieve goals (helping students understand) and solve problems ("thinking on her feet"). In fact, her conception is not unique, for Steward and Croft describe the writing lab in very similar terms: "The lab is a center for individual and small group instruction where students come, either voluntarily or on referral, to discuss and learn how best to meet requirements—those they set, those set for them—with any kind of writing they must do or wish to do" (p. 7). Their description of the writing lab distinguishes it as a "task group," rather than a "casual group," a classification John W. Keltner extends in **Interpersonal Speech-Communication: Elements and Structures** (1970): "The particular goal and objective of the task group usually involves some anticipated action. The casual group has no such specific task but may have a more generalized goal that does not reach specifically beyond the meeting it-

self" (p. 292). Clearly the goal of the tutorial extends beyond the meeting and involves the tutor in attempting a permanent change in the client's attitude or behavior toward writing.

Substituting the vocabulary of one discipline for another's in this statement provides us with a basic tenet of business management, as quoted in Robert Tannenbaum, **et al, Leadership and Organization** (1961): "Leadership always involves attempts on the part of a **leader** (influencer) to affect (influence) the behavior of a **follower** (influencee) or followers in a **situation**" (p. 24). Writing center experience, then, provides leadership training, for the tutorial situation is almost a paradigm of this definition. In fact, Thomas Scheidel and Laura Crowell (**Discussing and Deciding**, 1979), in breaking the leadership model into two interlocking parts, called "inner work" and "outer work," describe in some detail a process that approximates the functioning of the tutor as diagnostician, facilitator, teacher: "The leader observes and analyzes silently the ongoing work of the group on its task . . . These inner assessments, which are constantly altered by new observations, are the basis for the leader's overt actions – what is said and what is done; from the **inner work** springs the **outer work**. . . . We cannot, however, think of inner and outer work as being done in turn, first one and then the other; both are done **all the time** the [encounter] lasts" (p. 90).

Frequently at some part of this process the tutor must develop yet another role – interviewer – in order to elicit from students information about writing problems, needs, or expectations. Steward and Croft perceive this as a primary step of the lab process and include samples of it in their description of lab methods. As central as it is to effective tutoring, interviewing is not a simple skill to perfect. Keltner, in his speech-communication text, lists fourteen separate functions the interviewer must be able to handle, from controlling the focus of the interview and creating an atmosphere condusive to communication, to listening carefully and adjusting frequently to feedback (pp. 276-8O). Writing center experience allows the tutor to practice these skills regularly and to use them with growing ease and confidence. Indeed, the **amount** of experience the tutor receives is usually not available to the undergraduate in any other college settings, including interviewing classes which can allow only a limited number of interview chances for each student.

Clearly tutorial training and experience develop communication and leadership skills that corporate employers as well as school administrators value. All of us – as administrators, faculty, and writing center staff members – should be aware of the competitive edge our tutors have earned with their work for us, and they should be shown how to market it for their career plans. We must encourage our tutors as well as ourselves to develop new and non-traditional perspectives in evaluating the advantages of tutoring, for it is valuable in today's job market.

Does this mean that we, as writing center administrators, should change our recruitment policies in order to offer important managerial training to students who otherwise would be uninterested in tutoring or whose writing skills are borderline? Obviously, no; with vigor, no. Our first responsibility is always to the writing center's client – the student who needs or wants help in mastering part or all of the writing process. Criteria for staff selection must focus on finding as tutors those students who are themselves successful writers and who have the personality, temperament, and desire to work with others. To accept anyone less qualified to be a tutor would be a dereliction of our responsibility.

However, we can increase the already substantial benefits writing center experience and training bring to qualified tutors; by learning to analyze in terms of their perspective careers or future plans the skills and expertise they develop by tutoring, we can significantly aid our tutors. In short, as writing center administrators we need to do what we teach our composition students to do: adapt to the specific audience the situation identifies for us. By using the appropriate vocabulary or technical jargon, for example, we can enumerate our tutors' marketable skills in letters of recommendation to potential employers or in annual reports to the university ad-

ministration in the terms most useful and suitable to the situation. Thus, a corporate employer who really wouldn't care about a prospective employee's knowledge of current composition theories might be very impressed with her interviewing experience, while the university superstructure, which might not be concerned with specifics, might be interested in the percentage of former tutors employed and the variety of careers they represent. The tutoring experience remains the same, but the way we describe it must be determined by audience and purpose.

From the beginning of peer tutoring, we have all recognized that it can produce immense personal satisfaction and growth for tutors, and we have drawn on the obvious applications of tutoring experience for prospective teachers. We need, however, to move beyond traditional applications into the previously unfamiliar territory of a high-tech world. Our tutors do develop skills in the writing center that transfer readily into the new environment and prepare them to step into a wide variety of careers of status and authority. It is time that we advertised that fact.

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The Perry Model Applied to the Training of Tutors: Caveats and Implications

Lois More Overbeck

Think back for a moment to your first tutoring experience. I seem to remember that mine happened at the age of eight or nine. While acting out the usual prerogatives of the "big sister," I was surprised to receive appreciation instead of hostility from my sibling. "You are a good explainer," she said. As my experiences with tutoring multiplied (helping a child to see all of the letters in a word, or attempting to guide an illiterate adult as he painstakingly learned to write his own name), it became clear to me that being a "good explainer" was not enough. Teaching did not become learning until it was done by the learner.

Our tendency to take on the role of explainer is not entirely our fault, however. If, as Stephen North says in "Training Tutors to Talk about Writing" (College Composition and Communication, 33, December 1982), students "seem to think tutoring is . . . getting something done to or for them," is it any wonder that tutors are tempted to supply the band-aids, or in some cases, tourniquets? (434). Moreover, the immediacy of the tutorial situation may make tutors feel that they need to have answers. Especially when we are confronted by an insecure student, we may be tempted to solve the problem for him or to supply formulaic responses for individual questions. In the tutorial situation it is easier to see the product than the person.

But if we understand that tutoring in writing is intervening in writing processes, then we see that students "need help doing something" (North, 434). North recommends that tutors be trained to discover the place "where the writer 'is' in the composing process" and begin their work there (435). However, students often do not know what help is needed.

> Writers will be . . . trying to 'make an outline' when they haven't any items to outline. Or they'll be editing a draft for spelling and punctuation errors when it has no clear purpose or no discernible structure. . . .What they want to do doesn't account for where they are (North, 435).

Finding that place, however, does not suppose a static point; each new task may impose variables which challenge a student differently, just as a single assignment may generate widely different responses within a class. For example a student may experience little difficulty with organization when re-telling a well-known story, even though he may not have written it before; the same student may need to make very deliberate effort in order to organize an argument about a topic which has not been addressed previously (Cf. Sue Foster, "Manipulating Cognitive Load in Writing Assignments," unpublished, 1985).

If these concerns seem to complicate the tutorial relationship, perhaps this complexity is useful in training tutors. It may help us understand that the tutorial role is to help students acquire a new way of seeing what has been written, or of thinking about audience, or of feeling about the hard work of writing well. In this learning process, the tutor plays a supporting role, one which lets the writer have most of the good "lines" (ideas). Certainly we must begin at the writer's level of concern and then guide expectations so that the student achieves both a satisfactory immediate result and a continuing integration of skills which will allow him to continue to improve even without assistance. The tutor needs to be reminded that "Growth in writing . . . requires risk taking and failure; changes in composing habits or processes [may] produce awkwardness before grace" (e.g. embedded sentences may cause new types of punctuation error; more complex organizational demands may generate syntax errors not seen in cognitively simpler assignments) (North, 416). The tutor needs understanding of the relatively ragged progress of growth in order to know when to counsel patience and when to demand accuracy.

The dictionary regards tutoring as instruction and certainly we do "impart information." But I have been suggesting that it may be more helpful to consider tutoring as "education," namely a process leading out from the student which develops powers of reasoning and judgement as it imparts information. "Empower" has become a jargon word, but as inviduals, we do know what it means; the other day I had a chat with one of the tutors in the Writing Center and I left feeling good—about myself. A student struggling to achieve standards imposed by the writing class may look to tutoring for a "quick fix," but the writing tutorial should confirm him as a writer. To do so, the tutor needs a fairly broad understanding of intellectual growth and development so that he will recognize various needs in his students. He also needs to understand himself in these terms so that his own problem solving strategies are not inappropriated to students whose capacities and needs are different.

The Perry Model, which refers to the work of William Perry, **Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years: A Scheme** (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1970), is very helpful in describing the intellectual changes of the college years, and thus it helps account for individual differences which tutors frequently observe. Perry's ideas developed out of 15 years of interviews with Harvard students who were questioned at several intervals during their undergraduate years. Perry's generalizations attempt only to describe. Thus we should be wary about using his "scheme" or the "positions" within it to predict; rather, it would be more helpful to consider it as a model which helps us see more clearly.

Perry describes leaning as a multi-phased and recursive sequence. He uses the metaphor of "tabula rasa" to describe that cognitive position in which the student willingly accepts the authority of the professor, the text, and the facts of knowledge; the student is essentially a "dualist" who sees everything as right or wrong. This stance of absolute acceptance wavers when the student encounters varieties of truth, even disagreements among truths; then it gradually evolves into the cognitive position of "relativism." Eventually this stage becomes further qualified when the student realizes that some interpretations are more valid than others, so that multiple points of view must be evaluated for their basis of support. Gradually, this position matures to recognition that knowledge has a method of applying theory tested by validation, and that validation must be made with each application and particular context. At its highest level, cognitive maturity involves commitment and responsibility. "Committed relativism" suggests that the student can be "wholehearted" about chosen values and yet be open to the change of situation or information that would require him to re-examine his ideas; it also suggests that critical thinking about ideas unlike his own can be done without jeopardy to his commitment to other ideas.

While it would be tempting to accept Perry's Scheme as a vertical model of development, some caveats must be applied. One is offered by Wayne Booth ("Writing as the Creation of a Self—Implications for Teaching," 1981) who suggests that the Perry scheme also operates in an horizontal axis and that the process of inventing the self (or persona) in writing is constantly recursive. Indeed we may recognize such a pattern in our own intellectual processes; each time we write an essay, we are dualists about the issue, but as we become informed about multiplicity and move toward committed relativism, we make assessments and compare systems which help us understand the issue and our position more fully. By taking this position, however, we have not eliminated the possibility that new information may cause us to reconsider it. Ann Berthoff ("Writing to Make Meaning," 1981) suggests the necessity of recursiveness to the learning process; she argues that rather than a developmental analogue, one needs to consider meaning as an unfolding Japanese flower of wood which expands in water as does meaning within expanding social contexts. Both Booth and Berthoff suggest that higher order reasoning is not only sequential, but that at all stages, we increase our capacity to understand. Perry discusses recursiveness as not merely a circle, but more aptly a helix "with an expanding radius to show that when we face the 'same' old issues, we do so from a different and broader

perspective" ("Cognitive and Ethical Growth," in **The Modern American College**, ed. Arthur Chickering, Jossey-Bass, 1981).

Another caveat very important to the application of the Perry Model to the tutoring of writing calls attention to individual differences in students and the need for tutorial strategies to be equally varied in order to be effective. No person will be at a single position within the Perry Scheme in all areas of his life. We can appreciate this by looking at our own lives: we may be inflexible "dualists" about giving the car keys to teenage drivers, emerging from "multiplicity" in political matters, and still be "committed relativists" as literary critics. If this is true of our habits of thought, how much more might it apply to students who are just acquiring knowledge of ideas and themselves. At the same time, this caveat may be an opportunity. Most of our students do have academic strengths, and we may use their knowledge and understanding of one field to enhance their understanding of another field. I have used mathematical analogies to explain syntax, biological models to explain organization. Often, a tutor can be supportive in this way, because the student is assured that knowledge in one field transfers to another.

The Perry Scheme calls special attention to the transitions between one position and another. Perry notes that students experience anxiety and disorientation and are engaged in risk-taking when the security of one system of thought is gradually enlarged to approach another. Indeed in his description of the transition phases, Perry observes that contradiction challenges the accepted patterns of knowing and motivates the shift from one position to another. It is helpful for the tutor to know this and to offer support while guiding the reorientation. For example, a student who has always organized her papers using the five-paragraph essay form may find that extended analysis of a short story requires a more flexible organization. When she seeks help, the tutor may help her consider alternative strategies for organizing her information. This may solve the immediate problem, but success on one writing assignment does not neatly transfer to the next. The student may be a dualist despite her introduction to the idea that organization may take many patterns, if she assumes that a narrative form can be applied to every writing situation, then she has simply substituted the new pattern for the old. Another response to the new experience of considering multiple strategies for solving the problem of organization is what Perry calls "retreat." The student may react to the effort that it took to discover an appropriate organizational pattern for the last paper and may choose to simplify her ideas in order to fit the familiar five-paragraph essay form rather than repeat the effort needed to find a form to fit her ideas. Perry suggests that "Students who have just taken a major step will be unlikely to take another until they have come to terms with the losses attendant on the first" ("Cognitive and Ethical Growth," p. 108). A tutor who recognizes this reluctance may need to encourage, that is "to give courage" to continued application of new skills.

The Perry Scheme helps a tutor to distinguish among students and the help that they seek in order to know what kind of help to give. The student who asks the tutor to check over a paper for spelling errors accepts the standard of accuracy but has not accepted responsibility for meeting the standard. However, the student who seeks tutorial assistance because poor spelling is consistently causing poor grades is ready to observe and correct error patterns. Tutorial intervention can make this effort more productive. Without guidance and support, the student might be tempted to look up a few words, edit his paper for the mistakes noted, and then continue to guess about whether to double the final consonant. With tutorial help, the student may undertake a log of the errors his teacher has noted and of his own uncertainties as well. When he has grouped these into patterns, he may discover that he has a set of questions to ask, and thus he can reformulate habits and internalize the standard. The tutor may need to encourage the student to take a step beyond that expectation which brought him to the tutorial.

The Perry Model might be profitably applied to the tutor's own self-awareness. If tutors are alert to their own patterns of learning, they may be better able to assist students. Tutors who

have begun to make judgements characteristic of committed relativism have been able to understand the helpfulness of systems and patterns of thought and have the ability to be critical of them. Such tutors should be introduced to a wide variety of textbooks and guides and should be able to assess their asssumptions and methods. These tutors should be able to appreciate the value of considering writing as a process and be willing to approach that goal in a flexible way, considering always that the need of the student will dictate the priority of method. Such breadth of knowledge will help them avoid giving pat answers to writing problems (e.g. Comma splice? Take exercise 4 and tape B and bring your revision in the morning).

Less ideal, but perhaps more usual, will be a tutor who addresses the writing process as a person primarily aware of multiplicity. But if the tutor suggests to the struggling dualist before him that he can try any of these six options, he will overwhelm and frustrate rather than help the student. This tutor should consider all of the ways that a single idea could find expression, and perhaps he could encourage the student to discover some of these choices for himself (e.g. how would that tradition change if your grandmother died? how would you need to change this example if your audience was different?). A tutor who is comfortable considering the writing process as a series of choices can be effective by modeling the selection of alternatives; but always the tutor should be aware of the needs of the student so that he will not misappropriate his own learning strategies to guide a student who is learning in a different way.

The Perry Model is not a catch-all but a tool. It is an approach that demands active listening to the student being tutored and active listening to ourselves as we tutor. How do we communicate concern and interest? How do we structure experiences for the student that will foster learning? These are the questions which we must continually ask as we work with each individual. To adapt such an approach demands precise record keeping; changes in attitude and activity might be subtle, yet planning requires attentive observation. Tutors must be trained in assessment as a constant function of listening. Further, the implications of the Perry Model to tutoring are that the relationship between tutor and student should be a constant, a continuing partnership. If tutoring can be given only on a drop-in basis, then the classroom teacher needs to have some way to monitor and to support continued growth.

The Perry Scheme reaffirms the value of tutorials. It demonstrates that transitions between one pattern of thinking and another are vulnerable and uncomfortable passages. It warns to expect apathy, anxiety, temporizing, and "retreat," and challenges the tutor to model alternatives that will encourage learning. As the caveats and implications of the Perry Model suggest, the scheme both supports the tutorial programs of the writing center and challenges these programs to be more responsive and effective.

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Training Peer Tutors to Work in the Ideal Writing Lab

Teri S. Haas

I. BACKGROUND

The SEEK PROGRAM offers counseling, educational, and economic support to students who might not ordinarily have entered the senior colleges of City University of New York. At Hunter College, our SEEK Writing Lab serves 350 students registered in three course levels of English as a second language writing, in two levels of developmental writing for native speakers and in freshman composition.

Each semester, we employ 22 tutors who work an average of fifteen hours each. While we offer special workshops in research papers, grammar, conversation for ESL students, and creative writing, the foundation of our lab is the one-to- one writing conference. Tutees come to the lab regularly each week over the semester to meet with their tutors for an hour. The tutoring relationship becomes important to many developmental students because the tutor plays many roles: friend, counselor, teacher, collaborator, and interested reader. While all of these may be useful, two roles are most supportive of composing efforts, according to our recent research (Haas,1985) and observations; we believe that tutors who emphasize the roles of "collaborator" and "interested reader" best serve the inexperienced writer's growth.

Collaborative learning, in which peers share power and responsibility, is valued for class and writing lab by many theorists (Bruffee, 1972; Hawkins, 1976). The concept of the "interested reader," whose nonevaluative responses facilitate rather than direct the writer's revisions, is supported by authors known for their work on responding to texts (Knoblauch and Brannon,1983; Murray, 1979). Three years ago when we first evaluated our own research, we began to consider alternative ways of choosing and training tutors.

We had always hired graduate students, retired school teachers, and housewives for the lab, but now we talked about training peer tutors. Marilyn Daley-Weston, the director of the Learning Center and I, the faculty member coordinating our writing lab, found that our successful partnership encouraged our belief in the value of collaboration for our tutoring dyads. We chose peer tutors because they could better fulfill the collaborative learning functions stressed by Kenneth Bruffe (1972) and encourage tutees to be active participants; peer tutors might also be more flexible in their constructs about tutoring, willing to learn to respond to writers as interested readers concerned with meaning; and also peer tutors could act as positive models for our students, often the first of their families to attend college.Therefore, we sought currently enrolled undergraduates, preferably SEEK students. At that time we shared assumptions about composing which still guide our training.

II. ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT COMPOSING and TUTORING

Current theorists (Berthoff, 1981) contend that the writer strives to create meaning during composing,to bring coherence to his ideas and experiences. Tutoring, therefore, should follow the definition that Knoblauch and Brannon (1984) present for teaching; it "involves creating supportive environments in which a competence they [students] already have can be nurtured to yield increasingly mature performance" (15).

Inexperienced writers learn by writing and rewriting for, as Murray (1979) maintains, early revisions are an integral part of this process. Murray's discussion of internal and external revision differentiates between reformulating ideas to change or clarify them and tidying up external mechanical features. The writer must move through drafts concentrating first upon working out ideas and,finally, upon mechanics, grammar, spelling. However, Sommers' research (1980) shows that inexperienced writers often do not understand that revising is more than an editing

task. They need support from tutors who first ask them about what Reigstand and McAndrew (1984) have called higher order concerns,such as those of focus, organization, development. Young writers must learn that they can add, delete or move chunks of copy in their work and that early revising often entails this. Only after they have gotten the meaning clear for themselves should they worry about correcting it for others. Because of our assumption that composing is a process of formulating and reformulating meaning, we believe the best way to help inexperienced writers is to respond to their ideas first,saving editing concerns for last.

However the type of response is also very important. For example, a tutor may either tell the tutee specifically how to improve the text, or else help him or her decide upon one of the many options available. Since the tutor may neither understand the unclear text, nor know the author's intention, the latter seems preferable to imposing a solution. The tutor must help the author resolve the text. Open questions allow the author to compare his or her intention with the text's effect on a reader, but the choice must be left to the writer. Inexperienced writers must learn to test their own ideas, rather than relying upon the tutor's directions.

In the past, those tutors at our lab able to share authority for the session with their tutees (collaborators) and able to paraphrase or question the text (interested readers) offered unskilled writers the most valuable support. Therefore we wanted to train tutors to play those roles and also to stress meaning. At this time we began to develop selection and training procedures, a process that we continue to refine.

III. RECRUITMENT

We wrote letters to SEEK students who met our basic criteria outlined below. We also asked for recommendations from the ESL and English Education faculty, and registered job listings at the part-time placement office and the English Department. (We found that English majors were sometimes not the best choices to tutor developmental students. Perhaps they felt little empathy towards students troubled by a subject they enjoyed. Often they didn't want to learn new ways of composing when they excelled at older methods. We found that students training to be ESL teachers became excellent tutors.) We now have an arrangement with the ESL Department allowing student teachers to do some of their hours here. After the first year of recruiting, we also got referrals from our own tutors and these people usually became fine tutors.

IV. CRITERIA

The prospective tutor must meet these basic criteria: a 2.8 cumulative grade point average; one year of college or 24 completed credits; all remedial/developmental courses completed; freshman composition and all other English courses completed with a "B" or better. During the three years we've used this system we have found these adequate; however when an applicant has shown unique qualities, we have hired him or her as an exception to the rules. For example, Liz Rios, one of the more talented, motivated participants in a writing workshop was recruited before she completed freshman composition. Liz did well in training and we hired her, but didn't assign her any tutees registered in writing courses beyond her level. Liz has become an excellent tutor.

V. SELECTION

We ask a prospective tutor to write an impromptu composition about his/her composing process and bring in additional writing samples. From these we can get some idea of each applicant's process and stage of development. From the impromptu, we can also gather some ideas about the applicant's conception of composing. Is the formal outline a must? Is revising a re-

writing or editing process? Does the applicant know the difference between changes of substance and those of form?

We also have separate interviews with each prospective tutor, considering his/her previous job or volunteer experiences and reasons for tutoring. Marilyn tries to discover if the applicant has any experience he1ping others, including working at a summer camp or assisting siblings with homework. She wants to know if the applicant has ever been tutored, and what she or he thinks a tutor does. I question applicants about their composing practices, trying to ascertain whether they have learned free writing, brainstorming, drafting; I also investigate whether they believe in any procedure as a method which must be rigidly followed by all.

I ask the applicant to read a student's composition and tell me what he or she would say to the writer if it were a first draft. I hope that perhaps a person stresses meaning and offers positive as well as negative response. But the positive comment must seem valid and specific, not the old cliche, "you've really got some great ideas here but...." Of course, the prospective tutor may comment on mechanics because she or he believes that is what is desired, so I do not weigh individual answers too heavily.

From these interviews we form general opinions and separately rank the candidates and discuss our rankings. Often we arrive at similar evaluations. Sometimes we agree upon an applicant who is borderline, because we believe that training will make the difference. Also we know we are not committed to hiring the applicants, nor are they committed to accepting jobs, until after they complete paid training. The pre-service training course allows all of us to have second thoughts after working together. Some prospective tutors drop out; others are eliminated because their maturity seems questionable in areas such as punctuality, attendance, task completion, or they can not develop conferencing skills.

VI. AN OVERVIEW OF TRAINING

The initial training of eight weeks takes place during the semester prior to the time when the applicants begin tutoring. Groups of eight to ten prospective tutors meet with us three hours each week for paid training. Training the tutors is a collaborative effort. I emphasize the composing/responding process and Marilyn presents the communication skills necessary for the job. Prospective tutors meet twice a week: two hours in a writing workshop; one hour in communication skills. These are not disparate units, however; we organized the training together because many areas overlap and are reinforced when tutors hear both coordinators talk about the same issues or approach the same concept from opposite directions. Often we sit in on each other's workshops; always we discuss what happened. Most important, prospective tutors keep journals about their training which we both read and answer.

After training, new tutors are asked to spend ten hours observing senior tutors in the lab. Training then continues all year in once-a-week meetings of the entire lab staff.

VII. EVALUATION OF THE TRAINING PROCESS

During training we create a sense of community among the tutors and between the tutor and the coordinator. Therefore when the tutor doesn't understand or agree, he or she freely questions or dissents. We evaluate our training informally by the tutors' journals; what have they understood of what we've been discussing. Reading a new tutor's journal is an excellent way to find out if the training makes sense.

After they finish, tutors respond anonymously to the question, "What would you recommend for training future tutors?" Six months after they've completed pre-service training, tutors tell us during a short interview what they believe was most useful. From their journals and recommendations, we refine our training procedure.

VIII. TRAINING SESSIONS

We have agreed upon these goals:

1. Peer tutors must be collaborators who support active learners. They should perceive their tutees as learners who have to test hypotheses and make mistakes, as all learners do, in order for learning to take place. The tutee should be the only one writing on the text.
2. Tutors must respond to substance before form. They must concentrate on one or two major issues whenever possible. Tutors must be readers who question the author's meaning rather than dictating a way of fixing it.
3. Peer tutors must perceive their tutees as learners who come from various dialect and language backgrounds, rather than as bad users of language. While their objective remains to help tutees learn standard college usage, their attitude changes.

The following schedule presents a brief description of training and includes some of the assignments.

Week I: Writing Workshop (aims: To build collaborative rapport, and instigate discussion of the nature of language and dialect.) Bineck Exercise (Enclosed A); To initiate discussion of composing and individual differences, tutors answer Writing Profile (B) and compare answers in pairs and then as a group. Tutors also learn to discuss these profiles with their tutees who fill them out during the first session. Keeping an informal journal is discussed since new tutors are required to keep one during training. A sample is included (C); they are asked to write about the meetings and anything else they wish to share with the rest of us who will read and respond each week:

> Think of your readers as friends who expect informal writing. Write about what you don't understand or agree with, what you want to know more about. Write about your own composing/revising processes or, perhaps, what makes a succesful tutor.

Week II: During the second week they receive a model of composing as prewriting, writing, revising, and editing; they practice discovery techniques such as brainstorming or free writing. After free writing, tutors meet in pairs or groups and help each other find a focus. Peter Elbow (1979) called this the center of gravity and we use Elbow's response form (D).

Week III:Tutors write first drafts at home, bring them in and meet again in response groups. Response to content or meaning is stressed while tutors read early drafts. Various kinds of response models are used, acccording to the author's purpose. One is enclosed (E). However we also recognize that models serve only some of our conferences. We really must learn a general process of responding rather than specific questions/statements that fit every composition. Tutors write second drafts at home and meet during the fourth week for further group response. If focus, coherence, development,organization, and clarity, are clear, we move to lower order editing concerns. During this time, we read and discuss articles about tutoring chosen from the book edited by Muriel Harris (1982).

During the last four weeks, tutors are assigned a persuasive topic. Since this is the mode required in the Writing Assessment Test that all CUNY students must pass, we want our tutors to gain some insights about the mode from their own composing practices. During response to first drafts, tutors form triads; two take the roles of tutor and tutee while the third observes and fills out a feedback form (F). Each one has a turn at all of the parts and also critiques the others.

While this method of composing and responding goes smoothly through drafts during our training sessions, we also recognize that composing is not usually this neat, nor is tutoring. Some writers,for example, need to revise many times before finding their focus. Again, the tutor may never see all of the tutee's drafts but only the first or the last. Tutors, therefore, must learn to intervene in the composing process wherever the student needs help. We offer

our tutors in training a general model of tutoring (G) and a few very specific rules, but we recognize that each conference is unique. However we believe that when tutors gain knowledge of their own composing processes, learn to function as interested readers and collaborators who help inexperienced writers to create and revise their own compositions, they will have the skills to be able to individualize as necessary.

During the last three years we've observed changes at the writing lab. More students sign up and fewer drop out. The tutees are pleased, according to their midsemester evaluations. "For the first time in my life," wrote one tutee, "I can talk to Nancy about my compositions and she asks me what I want to do instead of telling me how to fix them up." Peer tutors may not be ideal for every writing lab, but trained to understand composing and responding, they offer a valuable alternative.

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Appendix A

EXERCISES USED FOR TUTOR TRAINING

A.

Early this morning, as I stood in the libstil, I thought "I wonder what makes a person want to become a binneck? Is it the herob? I doubt it. Is it fun to plem? Maybe. At any rate I sure never want to be a binneck."

Later, after I had been pleg duwe, Mary came smid and said, "George offered me ten lidden if I would herob to become a binneck." I burrew for a sned and said, "you bask lud rassel."

Are those strange-looking groups of letters words? What do they mean? How are they pronounced? What if the words mean something to me, but not to you? Perhaps your group should go over the passage and agree on the meaning/pronunciation of these "words." Write your meaning for each word in this list so that the passage makes some kind of sense and also agree on pronunciation.

libstil_____
binneck _____
herob _____
plem _____
pleg _____
duwe_____
smid _____
lidden _____
herob _____
burrew _____
sned _____
bask _____
lud _____
rassel_____

Now that your group agrees on the words, use them in conversation.

Consider 1.foreign language 2. correct dialect 3.wrong language

B.

WRITING HISTORY/PROFILE

1. What sort of writing do you enjoy most? Least?
2. When writing for class, would you rather have the teacher give you the subject or would you rather find one yourself? Why?
3. Where do you prefer to write? When? Do you have any favorite tools?
4. What kind of writing did you do most often in high school?
5. How did your teacher respond to your compositions? For example, did the teacher write comments, correct errors or mark a grade?
6. Do you usually rewrite your compositions? Why?
7. What does "revising" mean to you?
8. Are you willing to read your writing to other people? Who do you read it to?
9. Do you ever read your writing to another person before it's finished?
10. What do you think the characteristics of "good" writing are?

(Adapted from Brannon,L., Knight, M.& Neverow-Turk, V. Writers Writing. Montclair,N.J.: Boynton/Cook Publishers,1982.)

C. LAURIE'S JOURNAL*

5/84

We accomplished a lot on Monday. The most significant exercise we did was on listening. My partner and I did fairly well copying the pattern from the board. (My back was to the picture and she had to describe it to me.) It made me conscious of how important listening and verbal skills are. I noticed that everyone is a little more comfortable with each other.

We also discussed study habits and I realized just how bad mine were unfortunately. It's almost the end of the semester and I'm really behind in a lot of things (everything). I am a procrastinator. It will get done but this is ridiculous.

5/5/84

Subway Story: Standing on the A, I'm holding onto a rail near a window. The window is below my eye level. I lose track of the stops so I bend down to take a look–only 57th street. I've got a way to go. I notice a pleasant face as I return to my original position. I do a double take because he's so striking . As the train starts, I glance out the window and see him wave goodbye.

5/7

Saw my lifeline. It was more general than everyone else's. Looking at my life in such general terms, however, put things into perspective for me. I've been caught up with end of the year hassles. But looking at everything I've done in black and white I'm satisfied with myself. It's

*Quoted with the author's permission

come down to—I'm doing only the things I want to do and I've been strong enough to make major changes in my life when I realize I'm not happy with myself. I realize how important the psychological state of the tutees will be when I tutor. There are many influences besides school on a student's life and these will affect learning.

5/24

One of my first free days since finals have ended. I have a much clearer idea of what to do when writing a composition. Free writing and focused free writing first, followed by drafts, then revising, proofreading and editing. My hesitation about this was that my own writing habits got in the way. I'm pretty set in my ways and it's hard for me to see other ways of doing it. But having some written guidelines will help me when I work with others. The most important part of not focusing on grammar when first reading someone's work has to do with psychology, I think. It is important to point out the positive and get started on an upbeat note. Pointing out weaknesses automatically puts the "victim" on the defensive. He/she might question my authority for criticizing the work. Or he/she might take the remarks as personal insults. All in all it does not aid the situation at hand. The start of a session should concentrate on the positive.

D.

RESPONDING TO WRITERS

After the writer reads aloud, you might respond in these ways:

POINTING:	Point to (or repeat aloud) the words or phrases which you liked or which you remember. Perhaps they seemed convincing or colorful or energetic or true.
SUMMARIZING:	Very quickly tell what you found to be the main points, main feelings. Then summarize the writing into one sentence.
QUESTIONING:	Ask the author to clarify anything you didn't understand.

(Adapted from Elbow, Peter. **Writing Without Teachers**. London: Oxford University Press, 1973.)

E.

READER RESPONSE FORM

Offer feedback to the author by answering the following questions after you read the entire draft. Give the author specific reactions.

1. What did you like best?

2. What does the author think was successful or unsuccessful?

3. Go back and reread the beginning. (Read the first paragraph or two.) What do you think the composition is going to be about when you read only these?

4. Now go back and reread the rest. What is it about?

5. What strikes you as being the most important idea/feeling expressed in this draft?

6. Is that what the author intended?

7. What didn't you understand?

8. What do you think should have been left out or moved around? Why?

DEPARTMENT OF ACADEMIC SKILLS/SEEK WRITING LAB Teri Haas/Coordinator

F.

TUTOR'S FEEDBACK FORM

Please get into groups of three. Pretend you're at a tutoring conference. One person will play the tutee and present her first draft. Another will play the tutor and respond. The third person will observe, using criteria on this form. Then switch roles until you've all had a chance to play each role. Finally discuss what you noticed about each "tutor's" style.
Which higher order concerns were discussed: (focusing on topic, developing ideas, organizing, connecting or ?)

Did the tutor discuss 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more issues?
Did the tutor write on the draft?_____ Did the tutee make notes?_____
Was there a time when you didn't understand the tutor?

Did the tutor ask mostly open or closed questions?_____
Closed questions have only one possible right answer which the tutor knows before asking.
Open questions allow for expanded answers; there is no one right answer.

Who talked the most?_____

How could you tell the tutor was really listening?_____

_____

What did the tutor do that you would like to copy?

.....

_____

Department of Academic Skills/SEEK Writing Lab

G.

DEPARTMENT OF ACADEMIC SKILLS/HUNTER COLLEGE
Tutoring Model*

At	1.	Establish or re-establish positive rapport.
Every Session	2.	Be sure your tutee has checked in at the desk; make sure s/he signs the communication form.
	3.	If the tutee has no assignment, check the file to see what you planned to work on.
When your Tutee Has an Assignment	1.	Be sure you understand the assignment, its purpose, the kind of writing (explanation, description, summary, critical analysis, persuasion) and the audience.
But Hasn't	2.	Help the tutee to find a subject through freewriting, brainstorming, or talking.
Started a Draft	3.	Help the tutee expand the subject by focused freewriting or questioning. Be text specific; try the five "W's."
	4.	Help the tutee begin/continue/end a draft—Using leads or stock beginnings...Repeating key words or asking key questions...Stopping when finished...Checking the thesis to frame a formal ending.
When	1.	Point out a strength in the paper. (Be text specific.)

A Tutee	2.	Respond to higher order concerns first. Thesis/focus/controlling ideas; Development/details; Repetition of ideas; Clarity; Logic; Organization.
Has A Draft	1.	Respond to lower order concerns on the final draft. Sentence Structure; Grammar; Usage; Punctuation; Spelling; Repetition of single words.

(Adapted from Reigstad and McAndrew; **Training Tutors for Writing Conferences**, NCTE, 1984.)

Options for Active Learning: Using "Bulletin Board" Software

John S. Wallace

There are so many problems inherent in writing one's own software that many of us feel inclined to give up before we begin. Yet the rewards are many, as well. Particularly when instructors face the challenge of designing software which is to be used with their own students, it seems worthwhile to wade through the mass of difficulties in order to produce a software product which will do what it is supposed to do.

The problem faced by a colleague and me at Georgia Southern College involved the design of software which would permit students to participate actively in the teaching-learning process. Though the software was to be used at first with sophomore literature students, we found that it has application as well to any course or discipline which can utilize a degree of peer-tutoring and student input into the review and testing of the course.

The program, which is called "Bulletin Board," was developed by collaboration between myself and Jane Brown, who teaches in the English Department at Georgia Southern. "Bulletin Board" permits the instructor and students to enter both multiple-choice and essay questions on the material being studied in the class. It also permits any user to review the questions, to attempt answers for the multiple-choice questions, and to read or write "news" items, which have turned out to be one of the most popular aspects of the "Bulletin Board" program.

One of the most beneficial characteristics of the program is that it provides immediate feedback to a user attempting to respond to multiple-choice questions. Previously developed software did not permit students to find out immediately if they had answered each other's questions correctly; thus "Bulletin Board" represents a step in the direction of rewarding positive responses and encouraging a user entering a wrong response to try again, with no penalty for being wrong.

The system used with "Bulletin Board" consists of 27 Apples (Apple II Plus and Apple II e) located in the Learning Resources Center in the centrally located library on the campus. The computer terminals are connected through a Corvas Omni-net network to two Corvas 20 mega-byte hard disks. Each computer is equipped with a language card which provides a total of 64K bytes of random access memory. All terminals have at least one disk drive so they may be used as stand-alone systems in addition to using the Corvas. Five printers are also available in the Learning Resources Center.

"Bulletin Board" was designed for easy use and is completely menu-driven. Each class using the program is assigned a different volume on the Corvas and a user name to log onto the system. Each volume of the Corvas linked to "Bulletin Board" contains (1) the main program, (2) text files for the multiple-choice questions, the essay questions, and the news, and (3) a program used to initialize the three text files when "Bulletin Board" is first loaded. In addition, a machine language program entitled "Ultimate Input - Almost Anything Routine" by Peter Meyer is saved in each volume and is used by "Bulletin Board" to allow anything to be input in the questions and news.

Implementation of the program has proved simple for most students. At the beginning of an academic session, students are given a one-hour orientation to the "Bulletin Board" program by their instructor. This session has proved sufficient to permit most students to work successfully with the program; any student who finds it difficult to adjust to the computer may require an additional orientation session in the company of the instructor to feel at ease with the program.

The Learning Resources Center is open from 8:00 in the morning until 11:00 each night six days a week, and is open for nine hours on Sundays. Thus students have ample access to the "Bulletin Board" and have found ample time to enter various types of questions and to

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review and/or answer questions pertinent to the course material. Students find the stored questions particularly helpful as review sources before a test.

The "news" section of the "Bulletin Board" program has allowed students to link up with study partners, to ask general questions about the meaning of a section of assigned reading, to remind each other of questions suggested in class by the instructor, and even to complain that one certain question in the multiple-choice section has two right answers. Each "news" item and each question is signed with the author's initials; at the discretion of the instructor, a student may receive extra credit for his questions if they are used on the class test.

Before a test is given, the instructor uses a special command to print a copy of the suggested questions and selects those to be included on the test. Experience has shown that students often suggest questions which are excellent for testing. The areas in which students do not suggest questions have been valuable, too, in that the instructor, while reviewing the students' questions, will be able to realize that the area needs further discussion and amplification. If students persist in leaving a gap in their questions related to the course material, it is simple for the instructor to input questions in that area.

Other functions of the program reserved for the instructor's use are a deletion process, by which the instructor may remove questions which are inappropriate or which have several correct responses, and a squeeze process which provides additional room for future comments and questions.

The "Bulletin Board" program is written in BASIC to be used with Apple computers, but could easily be converted to run on other types of microcomputers. Since in each of the three options—multiple-choice questions, essay questions, and news—the computer spends much time reading from or writing to the text files, it was decided to use subroutines for these operations and to define the file name for the option being used just prior to using it. Subroutines are used for other repetitive operations such as reading the total number of questions on file, updating and saving the total number of questions on file, printing the questions, deleting questions, and squeezing the files.

To save possible loss of questions through computer error or other cause, a backup file of the questions and news is made each night by personnel of the Learning Resources Center.

The flow diagram before you is for the option, adding a multiple-choice question to "Bulletin Board." (explanation)

The accompanying figure shows the available options for "Bulletin Board." Note that those above the dotted line are used by both instructors and students; those below the dotted line are reserved for use by instructors only. Of course students could be allowed to perform all functions if an instructor so chose and could be given the commands for these functions quite easily.

"Bulletin Board" has proven to be easy to use and practical in providing students and instructors with a centrally located means of peer-tutoring and efficient review of course material. It is further successful because it engages students in the learning process, helping transform them from passive receivers of instructor-delivered information into active participants in the educational process.

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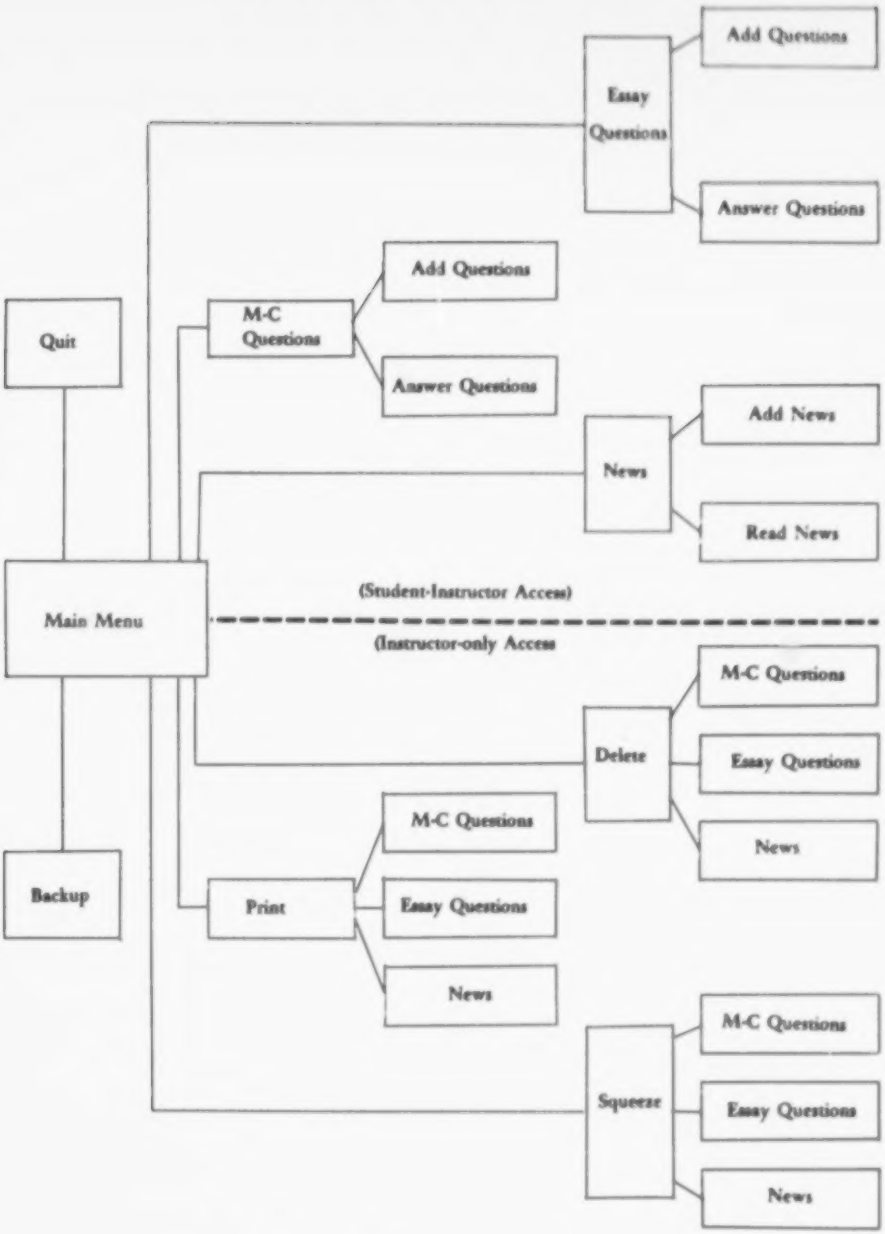
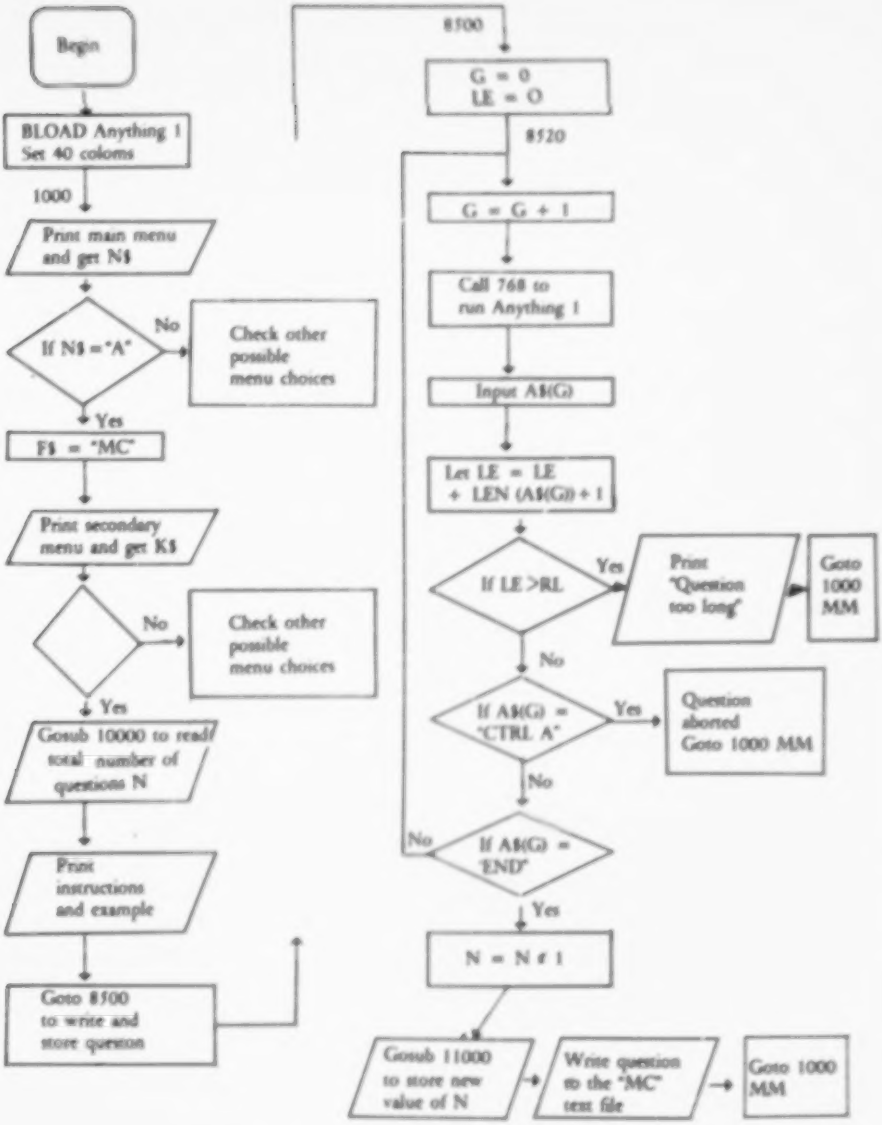
AVAILABLE OPTIONS IN "BULLETIN BOARD"



74

FLOW DIAGRAM FOR ADDING A MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTION TO "BULLETIN BOARD"



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Revision and Reader Benefit:
Tutoring Students of Practical Writing with the Computer

Part One
Melissa E. Barth

In business and technical writing, focusing on the needs of the reader rather than on those of the writer is referred to as "You Attitude" or "Reader Benefit." Many students experience difficulty putting this concept into practice as they write letters, memos and reports all directed toward a specific "real world" reading audience. While these students may have learned about audience in other composition classes, business and technical writing assignments often force them to address the issue in more immediate ways. Previously audience meant the teacher, or at most other members of the class: now, the reader is someone they have to convince to give them a job interview, an angry customer they need to placate, or someone they want to educate about a product or service.

In these situations, it becomes apparent (even to students who have resisted taking writing seriously in the past) that, if they misjudge their reader—or worse, if they forget about the reader entirely—they stand a good chance of being misunderstood. In the business world, misunderstanding translates into dollars lost, time wasted, and opportunities missed. When we get down to looking at writing in those terms, students begin to appreciate the power of the written word perhaps more than they had in the past. But how do we teach writers to shift their focus from themselves to the reader?

When I began teaching business and technical writing courses, I found that students rarely thought about their reader at all. I devised exercises to help them reorient their material so that it would interest their readers: I made up checklists on which students could develop an audience profile. With this list in hand, students could then organize and adapt their material about the product or service to match a particular reader's specific needs. These sorts of exercises differ very little from the prewriting listmaking I have any composition class work on in the beginning stages of an essay. Yet, because the writing tasks Practical or Technical writing students undertake are set in the "real world" rather than in the teacher's classroom, prewriting and revision can appear to be organized in a more focused manner.

For years I went through these steps with my class, handing out checklists, working on audience-and-use analyses for each writing assignment, making students go back and revise to take out the "I" and put in the "You." I must have used up a dozen red pens simply circling first person plural and singular pronouns and scribbling "Where's the reader in all of this?" in the margins of letters and reports. Now that I have a classroom equipped with twenty-one microcomputers—all set up for teaching writing, my life is simpler and my pen budget is considerably smaller. Where I once would count pronouns for students, I now use the computer to teach them to check for You Attitude. In fact, I use the computer to help students see revision as more than simple proofreading for typos and mechanical errors; I use the features of the word processor to help my students improve the content and organization of their material. And one of the first things I deal with is You Attitude.

The following set of paragraphs is typical of incorrect audience focus; in it the writer and not the reader is the most important person. Italics highlight the first person pronouns; underlining marks second person pronouns.

We Attitude

May I take this opportunity to express *my* thanks for the account you recently opened with *our* store. *We* are pleased to furnish a wide variety of products for the home or individual.

We want you to take full advantage of *our* store services, for *we* have the largest stock in the city. Also *we* make deliveries of *our* customers' purchases free of charge within 30 miles of *our* store.

We always like to receive visits from *our* customers, but *we* also fill orders by phone. *Our* customer service department aims to fill every order within the same day *we* receive it.

When shopping at *our* store downtown, customers are invited to use the free customer parking privilege provided just across the street from *us*.

We welcome you to Bekinson's. If *we* can be of additional service in any manner, please call on *us*.

Compare it to the following example in which the writer focuses on the reader (again, the first person pronouns are in italics and the second person pronouns are underlined):

You Attitude

Thank *you* for the account *you* recently opened at Bekinson's. Helping *you* meet *your* needs for clothing and home furnishings is a pleasure.

You will find 32 departments at Bekinson's stocked with a variety of quality items. And courteous sales clerks are here to assist *you* in selecting the merchandise that best meets *your* requirements.

If *you* prefer to shop within the comfort of *your* home, instead of coming to the store, *you* need only telephone 882-5555 and ask for "Personal Shopping Service." A Personal Shopper will gladly take *your* order for any number of items, answer *your* questions about brands and sizes available, and see that the goods *you* order reach *you* by store delivery within a few days.

When *you* shop at our store downtown, *you* are invited to use the free customer parking lot provided just across the street.

You are always welcome at Bekinson's. Please call on us whenever *you* need additional service.

The computer's "Search" feature helps students see the difference between I and You Attitude. In this mode a word processor will hunt for and stop at every occurance of a specific word or phrase, such as the pronouns I, my, we, our, and so on. Of course, I could simply have students go through a hard (printed) copy of their text circling first person pronouns and underlining second person ones. But since all my students learn word processing skills as an integral part of my courses, I prefer to use the computer. Furthermore, I want to teach students how to make use of the computer as a revision tool.

Initially, I ask the class to step through a sample exercise such as the one given above; as they walk their way through the paragraphs with the search function, most students are surprised at the discrepancy between the number of "you"s and "I"s. I next have them try the same routine on a letter which they have written (all materials in my class must be produced on

the word processor). They are asked to have a hard copy of the letter with them at their terminal while they use the hunt feature on the screen; as they work through their letter with the search function, they must circle or underline the various pronouns on the printed text. This act reinforces the concept for the students and gives them a double visual rendering of instances in which their letters fail to focus on the reader.

Once, when I used this routine in class, several of my better students hit the hunt key once or twice, finding all the "I"s and "my"s in a matter of seconds. They sat there waiting as their less adept classmates tapped away at the keys, seeing undesirable pronoun after undesirable pronoun blink at them on the screen. In this way I could also capitalize on peer pressure to show students who complained that no one could write in this way that some of their classmates did in face make good use of You Attitude. In many instances, students will share examples from their computer screen with others, another way to use peer review to aid the classroom learning experience.

Finally, I would like to point out another benefit of using a computer in this manner: writing with the computer and revising with, for example, the search function, makes a student more aware of her or his writing **as a piece of text**. The computer distances the student from the assignment in ways that hand or typewritten drafts cannot. Furthermore, because it removes the physical impediment of pencil or typewriter and paper that often helps build bigger writing blocks for insecure writers, the computer can actually help the reluctant writer become more interested in composing as a process. Because a word processor is a new writing tool, students don't bring with them the same set of lifetime negative associations as they would if they were writing and revising on paper. Teaching revision skills with a computer is rewarding for me not only because I have a powerful teaching tool at my disposal but because a word processor used in the manner I have described really does enable students to improve their writing, and, in many cases, to overcome some of their antagonism toward the writing process itself.

Revision and Reader Benefit:
Tutoring Students of Practical Writing with the Computer
Part Two

William C. Wolff

At Appalachian State University, the writing center provides tutoring devised for specific assignments given in all disciplines. The director of the University Writing Center meets with faculty to encourage that they write out their assignments and to offer help in composing the details of the assignments; the director returns to the Center staff with those assignments so that the tutors can study and discuss them in order to be prepared to assist students properly. The Center has a duty to guide tutors in learning how to aid students by reacting quickly but competently to two kinds of manuscripts: (1) student drafts and revisions before an assignment is due; (2) further revisions required by the teacher or desired by the student after the assignment is graded.

Gebhardt persuades us, or reassures us, that " students preparing to teach writing in public schools or college should understand important conceptual underpinnings of composition and the teaching of writing and should test them out in practice" (134).[1] Nemanich had already suggested some readings appropriate to this preparation:

> I expect students in my classes to know something of Aristotle and what he had to say about the art of persuasion. In addition, I want my students to know of recent work in rhetoric and composition especially Ken Macrorie's "free writing," Francis Christensen's "generative rhetoric," and Robert Zoellner's "talk-write" pedagogy. . . .I hope that some time during the course, we would also talk about the work of Wallace Douglas, Janet Emig, James Moffett, and Edward Jenkinson, and Donald Seybold—among others (47).[2]

Such readings, and other readings related to composition theory, will prepare the future writing center tutor to diagnose both individual students as writers and their writing. In her address to the Southeastern Writing Center Association's fifth annual meeting on April 19, 1985, Muriel Harris of Purdue University, quoted Donald Murray on what writing teachers do:

> The writing teacher must train himself to be an expert diagnostician. This is central to the job of teaching writing. He wants to spot the most critical problem in each student's writing to give that student a prescription which will be effective for him (19).[3]

Harris' comment is:

> In the writing center diagnostic work is even more critical because the center is a referral place.

ASU is intent that its students receive quick and competent diagnosis of their writing by tutors in its University Writing Center.

II

Appalachian State University offers a graduate course, English 5100, "Approaches to Composition." My approach to teaching that course in the spring semester of 1985 was to lead students through a series of readings in rhetoric and discourse theory, ancient and modern. The course was meant, in part, to train teachers of English and tutors in writing centers.

The course had five students registered: two were regular tutors in the University Writing Center; one was a volunteer member of the Center's staff; two were not members of the staff. Of the latter, one is a former journalist, and one is preparing to be a teacher of gifted children of high school age.

One of the course's requirements was to prepare heuristics for students coming to the Center. When the invitation came to speak at the Southeastern Writing Center Association's 1985 conference, I asked Dr. Melissa Barth if she wished to make a presentation. Professor Barth said she would and showed me her assignment on "reader benefit" which requires students' writing to focus on their readers' concerns. Tutors needed to be prepared to react constructively and quickly to this assignment.

Students would be coming to the Center asking tutors to redirect their concepts of audience analysis, perhaps even to create that analysis. Often students need to be reminded that they are not writing a piece of writing; they are writing a piece of reading. In the "reader benefit" assignment, students move from a we attitude to a you attitude in their writing, specifically in the writing of a letter to customers who have just opened a charge account at a department store. The student-writers must imagine the needs of the store's new customers.

The students of the graduate course were asked to create some heuristics for leading students coming to the Center for help on this specific assignment. The heuristics were to come from the graduate students' knowledge of rhetoric and discourse theory. A few of the many works[4] the class had read were:

> Aristotle. "Rhetorica." **The Basic Works of ARISTOTLE**. Ed. Richard McKeon. New York: Random House, 1941. 1325-1454.

Burke, Kenneth. **A Grammar of Motives**. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969.

_____. **A Rhetoric of Motives**. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1950.

Christensen, Francis. **Notes Toward A New Rhetoric: Six Essays for Teachers**. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1967.

Emig, Janet. "The Uses of the Unconscious in Composing." **College Composition and Communication**. 15 (1964), 6-11.

Larson, Richard. "Discovery through Questioning: A Plan for Teaching Rhetorical Invention." **College English** 30 (1968), 126-134.

Young, Richard E., Alton L. Becker, and Kenneth L. Pike. **Rhetoric: Discovery and Change**. New York: Harcourt, 1970.

The graduate students handed in the tentative heuristics they would construct just after reading the students' papers; the graduate students also suggested appropriate theoretic bases for each heuristic. These heuristics are included here.

A former high school teacher and a member of the Center's staff, Daniel J.A. Wagner, returned the following:

From Aristotle's **Rhetorica** I, iii, 1358a (36-39). Rhetoric falls into three divisions, determined by three classes of listeners to speeches. For of the three elements in speech-making—speaker, subject, and person addressed—it is the last one, the hearer, that determines the speech's end and object (p. 1335).

Explanation: Although these questions pertain specifically to the ancient Greek art of speech-making, these points carry an implied connection into present-day rhetorical presentations in writing.

Questions:

1) "Why have you sent the letter to the person or persons to whom you have sent it?"
2) "Why does this person need it?"
3) "When you revise, why would you leave some parts as they were?"
4) "Why and how does this letter apply to the person or persons to whom you have sent it?"

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This heuristic concentrates, in questions one and three, on getting the student-writers to understand the purpose of the piece of writing. In questions two and four, the self-interest of the letter's readers is the subject of the writer's concern.

The author of the following heuristic, Daniel Swaringen, is a former journalist who has returned to formal studies. His suggestions based on the reading of Aristotle's **Rhetorica** suggest an understanding of Young, Becker, and Pike's particle, wave, and field perspectives (pp. 122-154) as well as of the Aristotelian triad of appeals—logos, ethos, and pathos (**Rhetorica** I. ii. 1356a (22-25). Mr. Swaringen seems to concentrate on the Burkean pentad as a reflection of the journalist's focus on who, what, when, where, why.

Aristotle, **Rhetorica**

1) How can the letter be persuasive?

2) Which approach works best: logos, ethos, pathos? The nature of the audience should help determine the answer to the second question.

Logos: Is charging a customer logical because a) it's cheaper? b) it's convenient? c) there are services available to charge customers not available to others?

Ethos: What is the integrity of the business? Is it implied or explicit in the letter?

Pathos: Will the product or services make the receiver happy? more beautiful?

Kenneth Burke:

A. Identification: **A Rhetoric of Motives**, pp. 55-59. Who is the letter writer? How does the letter writer "identify" with the reader, the new charge customer? Is the letter writer himself a charge customer? If so, why? What are the benefits the writer has gained by being a charge customer?

B. Pentad: **A Grammar of Motives**, pp. xv-xxiii. What is the motive behind the letter? Why a letter at all? Consider Burke's Pentad: Act, Agent, Agency, Scene, Purpose. The writer should address each as a question. For example, ask the student why writing a letter (act) is preferrable to a phone call? And why write a letter at all (purpose)?

Below is the heuristic of Grayson Beane who volunteers time to the Center. He is a former high school teacher of seven years.

Young, Becker, Pike. **Rhetoric: Discovery and Change**, (122-154).

1) Particle Perspective: how a thing differs from everything else – Who is the person that you are writing to? What is his name? The salutation should name the "you," the customer, as a personal appeal.

2) Wave Perspective: how a thing can change and still be itself – Why would the reader return to this store? Over a period of time, what would be the services attracting reuse?

3) Pield Perspective: how a thing fits into larger systems of which it is a part – What needs would your reader have in common with other people in the area? How can this store help them? Why would a customer tell others to use the store?

Statement of Problem:

Why do you need to write this letter? If it is to establish a bridge in communication, then the writer's consciousness must be extended to the readers' self interest.

How are you and your reader alike? How are you different? The writer must be aware of the audience as a community of "store-users," so to speak, all of whom do not have the same needs.

Patricia Randall composed this heuristic. She is a graduate student preparing to teach the gifted.

In reviewing the rough draft of the letters, small group discussion would be helpful, perhaps up to five members with one student responsible for the businessman's emphasis and the others looking from the consumers' viewpoints. While using the five stages of this heuristic, the businessman's hat should be passed around so that every student has a turn wearing it. Through the process of the questioning, the student should evaluate the answers and details and perspectives by 1) discovery of comparison or analogy 2) by personal response 3) and by the detection of conflict, inconsistency or inexplicability. Richard Larson suggests these questioning levels in his article "Discovery Through Questioning: A Plan for Teaching Rhetorical Invention," **College English**, 30 (1968), 126-134.

Heuristic:

1) Audience—who is your intended reader? Consumers in the group should pretend they have a new account. What services does the store offer you? What goods? What do stores that you frequent offer? What is it that you want from a store? What goods or services are there that you feel would be useful? Are there any that you do not want or do not feel would be useful? What is more important to you, better service and acceptable goods or acceptable services and better goods? Do you need extra services if you have excellent goods at hand? What services do you feel are necessary for a "goods" business? Are goods and services necessary?

2) Main point—thesis statement: Have you made the benefits discovered in No. 1 clear to the readers? Why should the readers continue to shop at this store? Why might they not continue to shop there? Why have you arranged the benefits in any particular order? Why did you even include some of these?

3) Look at paragraphs: Will the letter cause these readers to compare your store with other shopping experiences? Why should you lead the customer to a comparison? Have you covered your business enough to insure your business looks good in any light? Are your paragraphs clear enough to make the readers' responses favorable to your ideas and thus to the store? Are there any problems in understanding your services or the goods that you are offering?

4) Specific knowledge of the subject: why would a business feel this assignment might be useful? What amount of personal response is necessary in business? Is there any conflict of interest between con-

sumer and businessperson? Why or why not? Is there any inconsistency in how your business appears to the consumer?

5) Main point—Is it clear? Would you continue to shop here? Would this letter effectively persuade you or not? Why would you even stop to read this letter? Was this letter helpful to you as a consumer? as a businessperson?

Ms. Randall concentrates on group tutorial sessions and demands specific responses about the customers as a group so that a real "you" can easily be imagined by the writer.

Dawn Dutka is a member of the Center's regular staff. Because her heuristic implies knowledge of Kenneth Burke's identification theory, she insists that the assigned letter be seen as effective business communication, not as an academic assignment. She begins by concentrating on suggestions from Janet Emig.

1) We are all devastatingly familiar with the conscious student theme. During dire weeks it seems no other kind finds its way into our Out Box or under our Magic Markers. By **conscious** I do not mean selfconscious in the sense of a style over-aware of itself; among high school and Freshman English students, this form of consciousness is not common. I mean **conscious** in the sense that the theme seems to have been written from one layer of the self—the ectoderm only, with student involvement in his own thought and language moving down an unhappy scale from sporadic engagement to abject diffidence. "The Uses of the Unconscious in Composing." **College Composition and Communication** 15 (1964), 6.

2) Student should identify with the writer. Identify audience as someone you are familiar with.

3) Who is writing this letter? You as a student? Do not look on this as an assignment. Instead, consider that you have to get this store to make a profit. As a professional, you must sell this store to keep your job.

4) Think of your mother who has just opened a credit account at a store. Why would she do this? What does the store offer her as a career-housewife-retired woman? Were the salespeople friendly? Were the prices on particular items good in comparison to other stores' prices.

5) Think of your girlfriend/boyfriend as the customer. What is more important to him/her in shopping? Prices, sales, quality of merchandise, store personnel, store layout?

6) Think of your economics professor as the customer. Consider (a) how he/she dresses, walks, talks; (b) what kind of car he/she owns; (c) what is his/her age and marital status. Would the professor open a credit account at this store?

All five graduate students have understood the need for preparing the "Practical Writing with the Computer" class to ask appropriate questions which will help them switch from a "we" attitude to a "you" attitude in their writing, thus focusing on "reader benefit."

One of the problems that writing centers face arises when students bring varied assignments to the tutors for help in writing. Tutors need to make quick but informed decisions on how to help the students. Some tutors without training in discourse theory may come up with heuristics much like the ones suggested here. But tutors with training in discourse theory may be better prepared to compose constructive heuristics quickly and effectively.

To satisfy the needs of ASU's students of composing on the computer, the Center has created heuristics specifically to help students revise, so their wording emphasizes the readers' benefit. The ASU's Writing Center expects to be prepared to tutor students of practical writing with the computer because our training in discourse theory will be useful in devising heuristics.

Endnotes

[1]Richard C. Gebbardt. "Balancing Theory and Practice in the Training of Writing Tutors." **College Composition and Communication** 28 (1977), 134.

[2]Donald Nemanich. "Preparing the Composition Teacher." **College Composition and Communication** 25 (1974), 47.

[3]Donald Murray. **A Writer Teaches Writing** Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., Inc., 1968, p. 19.

[4]Readers may write to me to get the complete bibliography used in the course.